

Hafa Adai!

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POLL RESULTS

Should foreign workers be made to pay for their own medical insurance?

Yes 150

No 83

No opinion 8

Sunday, January 30, 2011

INSIDE



Social Holocaust

The portraits of his dead father are among the few mementoes Bud Meyers is certain he will take with him when he is forced from his home of five years.

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Chaos in Cairo

With protests raging, Egypt's president named his intelligence chief as his first-ever vice president on Saturday.

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OWN 'Milestone'

As it nears its one-month mark, the Oprah Winfrey Network has grown its prime-time audience by one-third over the network it replaced.

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ONLINE SOLICITATION FOR SCHOLARSHIP, 1,700-FT PEACE TOWER ON TINIAN

Govt officials warn of possible scam

» **OAG says it does not endorse or review revenue for SMDC's Your Happy Life**

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

A Tinian-based charitable organization has been soliciting online donations of up to \$1 million or more purportedly to fund scholarship programs for "underserved and disadvantaged children" worldwide, as well as to build a 1,700-foot peace memorial tower on Tinian to continue generating revenue for these children and promote peace.

See SCAM on Page 4

Senate expands to 30 percent hotel rooms, balconies where smoking may be allowed

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTERS

By a vote of 9-0, the Senate passed on Friday its own bill expanding from 20 percent to 30 percent the number of rooms at each hotel that can be designated as smoking areas.

Sen. Luis Crisostimo's (D-Saipan) bill also allows smoking in the attached balconies of these hotel rooms.

The Senate, however, did not act on a House bill introduced by Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) that expands the number of hotel smoking rooms to 80 percent.

Current law allows up to 20 percent of rooms at hotels to be designated as smoking areas.

Senate Bill 17-37, Senate Substitute 1, Senate Draft 1, however, could not be immediately passed by the House which also held a Friday afternoon session be-

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Crisostimo



WWW.YOURHAPPYLIFE.ORG
An artist rendition of the planned 1,700-foot peace memorial tower on Tinian, posted on the website of SMDC & Associates.



House, Senate OK hiring requests for over 100 vacant positions

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The House and Senate approved dozens of requests to fill over 100 vacant positions in different government agencies, during back-to-back sessions on Friday afternoon.

Under the Fiscal Year 2011 budget law, all government hiring need the approval of the House and Senate in the form of joint resolutions.

The House adopted, among other things, Senate Joint Resolution 17-3 for the Department of Public Health's hiring of 57 full-time em-

ployees that include filling in vacancies for doctors, nurses, cooks, and accountants that are deemed "as very critical to the delivery of essential services under Public Law 7-21."

The House also adopted four other resolutions.
See HIRING on Page 4

PRICEY MWARS

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, left, auctions off Federated States of Micronesia President Emanuel "Manny" Mori's mwar which fetched \$1,000, after several bids that started at \$400, at a fundraising for Mori's reelection for Chuuk senator at-large in the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort & Spa in Garapan on Friday. Fitial's own mwar raked in \$400 after a handful of bids and lots of laughter from the audience of mostly businessmen and government officials on a government austerity Friday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

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Local

DURING PAST SIX FISCAL YEARS

CUC incurs \$381 million in fuel expenses

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. spent \$381.3 million in fuel expenses during the last six fiscal years or from 2005 through 2010.

Based on the audited financial statements of the agency, it incurred the highest fuel cost in 2008 when the island suffered massive power outages and entered a \$6-million

contract with Aggreko for its generators. That was when the CUC was first placed under a state of emergency.

Records from the agency show that CUC spent \$59.2 million for fuel in 2005. An increase of 28 percent was noted in fiscal year 2006 when the agency purchased \$76 million worth of fuel.

In fiscal year 2007, the expenditure for fuel went down by 17 percent when CUC incurred

only \$62.7 million in total cost. However, a significant increase of 29 percent was noted in 2008 when CUC purchased \$81 million worth of fuel.

Because of the unpredictable fuel cost trend, the figure drastically went down in 2009 when the agency recorded total fuel expenditure of only \$47.4 million, which reflects 41 percent decline from 2008.

For fiscal year 2010, a total of \$54.8 million was paid

by the government for fuel expenses, which reflects a 15 percent increase.

Just for FY 2010 alone, CUC said yesterday that its power plants are consuming two million gallons of fuel per month.

Saipan Tribune learned that for the first three months of FY 2011, CUC recorded \$16.1 million in fuel expenditure.

Following the continues rise in fuel prices, CUC successfully petitioned the Commonwealth

Public Utilities Commission for an increase in the levelized energy adjustment clause rate by \$0.04, bringing the amount to \$0.02812/kWh from the previous rate of \$0.24446 per kWh.

CUC said that the current LEAC rate is about \$0.08 per kilowatt-hour higher than the rate in January 2010, while

\$0.05 higher than it was in January 2009, and \$0.08 lower than it was in September 2008.

According to CUC executive director Abe Utu Malae, the changes of the rates was result of the unstable fuel price in the world market.

"The continuous fluctuation
See FUEL on Next Page

DIVORCE FILINGS STILL TOP
FAMILY COURT CASESCNMI divorce cases
continue to increase

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Divorce proceedings continued to top all other cases filed in the Family Court Division of the CNMI Superior Court in 2009.

According to the Judiciary's 2009 Annual Report released last week, through the end of last year a total of 751 various cases were filed in the Family Court. Of that number, 280 were divorce cases, followed by 173 Family Protection Act (restraining orders), 98 guardianship, and others.

There were 265 divorce cases filed on Saipan, nine on Rota, and six on Tinian, for a total of 280.

In the last few years, divorce cases were also the highest among 14 types of cases in the Family Court.

In 2006, there were 233 divorce cases; in 2007 there were 223; and 244 in 2008.

Statistics also showed a similar increasing trend in Family Protection Act cases: 172 in 2006; 198 in 2007; 159 in 2008.

The Family Court Division then under associate judge Kenneth L. Govendo began offering in 2008 a service to parents and children called "The Separating Parents Program," which aims to educate parents about the effects of divorce or separation on their children.

Other cases before the Family Court are adoption, alimony, annulment, change of name, civil commitment, emancipation, guardianship, paternity, petition to correct birth certificate, Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act (URES), wardship, and juvenile.

R_x

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TO SAVE ON PERSONNEL COST

20 positions left unfilled in airports, seaports

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Twenty airport and seaport positions were left unfilled by the Commonwealth Ports Authority this fiscal year to save on personnel cost, according to CPA executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero.

In an interview after a special CPA board meeting Friday, Deleon Guerrero said from 228 approved full-time positions for the three islands, only 198 were filled. He said 20 vacant positions will not be filled, unless management classifies the post as critical to its operation.

"Until such time we feel that we are in a better financial situation, the ports authority will not hire any replacement for these positions. We are confident that we can run our three airports and seaports with the 198 FTEs onboard," he said.

Since the start of fiscal year 2011 in October last year, all CPA personnel have been working on an 80-hour biweekly schedule.

This is in contrast to the central government and other autonomous agencies that enforced work-hour reductions through austerity Fridays.

According to CPA comptroller Derek Sasamoto, the ports authority projected over \$16 million in combined revenues this fiscal year. For the airport division, the agency forecasts to collect \$10.695 million in revenues, while the seaport is expected to post \$6.614 million in revenues.

However, Sasamoto pointed out that since this projection was made in April 2010, the figures may change as a result of actual expenses and collections.

The comptroller, who is currently reviewing the records of the first quarter of FY 2011, said "adjustments" in operation may be injected this fiscal year depending on the actual collections.

He said if actual revenues in first quarter showed a "drastic cut," he may recommend some internal austerity measures to reflect the changes.

"If we saw a drastic cut, we will ask the board to reconsider and figure out how we can handle it. If the need arises, I will speak to the executive director on work hour cuts. But as we speak now, I can say that as long as we follow our budget and control our costs we should be OK," he said.

'Unscheduled cost'

Sasamoto said CPA failed to achieve its bond service ratio for the airport last fiscal year because of unanticipated costs.

Based on the CPA audit report, airport's actual revenue in FY 2010 totaled \$11 million. It exceeded the projected revenue of \$10.8 million.

However, CPA incurred unanticipated expenses of over \$1 million. These included \$103,000 for the added repairs for the baggage handling system; \$95,680 for the Allied Pacific Environmental Consulting Inc. soil contamination project; \$132,000 was paid to Internal Revenue Service; and \$68,000 was paid to the U.S. Department of Labor for issues of noncom-

pliance. These were incurred by CPA during the third and fourth quarters of FY 2010.

Sasamoto said that during FY

2009, the airport division met the debt service ratio agreement.

He said for the seaport division, CPA was successful in

complying with the rate covenant last fiscal year and is hopeful it will maintain this standing for 2011.

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FUEL

From Page 2

in cost per kilowatt-hour is directly related to the variations in fuel price," said Malae.

The new power rate, approved last Jan. 11, changes the current LEAC component of the power billing and was based upon a three-month amortization period. For a residential ratepayer using 500 kWh every month, this will result in an overall increase in a typical electric bill of approximately 14.6 percent—or \$18.40 per month.

The new LEAC rate is comprised of the following elements: fuel and lube oil element, \$0.23033 per kWh; cur-

rent true-up element, \$0.00423 per kWh; price volatility element, \$0.00646 per kWh; technical and regulatory support, \$0.00343 per kWh; under recovery from October to December 2010, \$0.00683 per kWh; and projected under recovery from January to March 2011, \$0.02997 per kWh.

The newly established LEAC rate will continue until changed by subsequent CPUC order.

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25 MPG

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USED CAR CLEARANCE

YEAR	MAKE/MODEL	MILEAGE	REDUCED PRICE	YEAR	MAKE/MODEL	MILEAGE	REDUCED PRICE
2009	Mazda RX-8 Sport	5,588	\$23,995	2008	Hyundai Accent	38,506	\$8,995
2010	Mazda Mazda3i	8,156	\$14,995	2005	Ford Taurus SEL	45,161	\$7,995
2006	Toyota Camry XLE	22,705	\$14,995	2004	Hyundai Santa Fe	59,873	\$7,995
2008	Mazda Mazda3i	39,098	\$12,995	2007	Hyundai Accent	33,712	\$7,995
2006	Ford Escape XLT	87,769	\$11,995	2006	Hyundai Accent	38,801	\$6,995
2004	Ford Explorer XLT	90,030	\$10,995	2003	Kia Sedona	103,205	\$3,595

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BASED ON 2009 AUDIT REPORT

NMHC settles with 35 of 45 homeowners

» Files lawsuit vs Tottotville contractor

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Housing Corp. settled with 35 of the 45 Tottotville homeowners and has filed a lawsuit against the contractor and the designer/construction manager of the housing subdivision in fiscal year 2009.

This is based on the management's discussion and analysis from the latest NMHC audit report on financial statements for year ended Sept. 30, 2009 conducted by Deloitte and Touche and released by the Office of Public Auditor on Jan. 26.

In 2005, the homeowners filed complaints concerning the poor workmanship in the construction of their homes in the first subdivision built by NMHC primarily for low- to moderate-income

families on island.

The discussion and analysis claimed that the contractor and the designer/construction manager have been contacted and mediation was pursued to address the complaints.

"However, major issues being disputed are still unresolved by parties involved. Court hearings are ongoing with the latest held on Jan. 5, 2010," it added.

The analysis also identified Public Law 15-48 signed by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial which eliminated the 10-year moratorium on NMHC's loan payments to Marianas Public Land Trust.

"PL 15-48 imposed serious financial burdens as NMHC was required to commence payment to MPLT," it said, adding that both organizations

finalized a portfolio transfer in 2008.

Financial highlights

The management's discussion and analysis also provided the financial highlights of NMHC for FY 2009.

From \$21,420,983 in FY2008, total assets for the agency decreased to \$19,407,494 or 9 percent in FY2009 due to housing assistance payments equity being utilized to fund the deficiency in revenues received from the grantor over actual HAP payments.

"In addition, all disaster vouchers from Typhoons Tingting and Chaba were converted to regular vouchers bringing the total to 363 voucher units that NMHC now administers and monitors for compliance," the report stated.

The report noted a 2 percent net decrease amounting to \$245,762 in capital assets for FY2009.

Total liabilities saw a six percent de-

crease from \$7,932,161 in FY2008 to \$7,427,196 in FY2009, while total net assets decreased by 11 percent from \$13,488,822 in FY2008 to \$11,980,298 in FY2009.

The report also noted that net operating revenues are at \$7,396,398 for FY2009 compared to previous year's \$4,823,801. This translates to a 53 percent increase as a result of a significant decrease in bad debts, from \$2,399,030 in FY2008 to \$279,025 in FY2009.

Total operating expenses also increased from \$6,910,148 in FY2008 to \$8,559,197 in FY2009 or equivalent to 24 percent.

According to Deloitte and Touche, the increase is largely attributable to the loan guaranty and increase provision in Section 8 rental expenses, repairs and maintenance, salaries and wages, utilities, travel and ESG Program

Funding, revenue

The management's discussion and analysis further noted the dwindling resources for NMHC due to the decrease

in the federal funds it receives.

To illustrate, the Community Development Block Grant funding allocation alone was reduced by \$506,421 for FY2009 which resulted to administrative loss worth \$101,284.

On the other hand, the agency also anticipates a \$215,000 decrease in revenue from the Section 8 Multifamily project on Rota due to the 33 percent occupancy rate.

The discussion and analysis noted that the low occupancy rate is caused by housing applicants relocating to the mainland for better opportunities and additional income.

NMHC continues to apply cost reduction approach to lower the deficit for each fiscal year, it said.

"The continuing economic challenges may result in further budget reductions in [FY2011] but NMHC has mechanisms in place to closely monitor such actions and is actively pursuing alternative funding opportunities to compensate for reduction in the traditional sources of funding," it added.

SCAM

From Page 1

The SMDC & Associates web address is www.yourhappylife.org.

"Millions of tourists will visit this tower in honor and respect for those men and women who sacrificed their lives for peace in this world," the website says.

At least two elected government officials, who said they were approached by SMDC & Associates as early as last year, questioned the legitimacy of the online solicitation. They warned of a possible scam that needs to be investigated by local and federal agencies.

One of the elected officials said he was asked to donate \$1,000 but refused to do so because of the questionable nature of the project.

Attorney General Ed Buckingham, when asked for comment, said yesterday that the OAG "does not review revenue that might be received by 'Your Happy Life' from charitable donations."

"If anyone makes a claim that they want your donation to 'Your Happy Life' because it is endorsed by the Office of the Attorney General, the claim is untrue," Buckingham said in a statement.

Press secretary Angel Demapan separately said yesterday that the Fitial administration is not aware of the development being announced on this particular website.

"We had not known of this website until now. The OAG is also unaware and is now gathering information regarding this movement, if in fact they exist," Demapan told *Saipan Tribune* in an email.

Demapan and Buckingham said consumers should beware.

"There is an old expression: caveat emptor. This means 'let the buyer beware.' Consumers, as buyers should beware. Also, those who might be inclined to share their scarce resources by giving to a charity should also be sure that the resources are really going to a legitimate, charitable purpose and not a SCAM," they said.

The two urged the public to contact the Office of the Attorney General if they encounter suspicious claims.

The public may report the information by phone 670-664-2341 or fax 670-664-2349, or by contacting Meredith Callan at the Office of the Attorney General.

'Bronze statues, revolving restaurant'

Besides soliciting donations to provide for children's scholarships, SMDC & Associates also offers 10-foot bronze statues or corporate logos for those who donate at least \$1 million, to be displayed in the convention hall of the planned commercial peace tower with a revolving restaurant on top.

The charity also offers free hotel rooms, free food, and free skydiving from the top of the tower to donors.

Posted on the website is a photo of SMDC & Associates chair Serafin M. Dela Cruz with former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Dela Cruz is currently off-island.

When Cruz was contacted on the Tinian number listed on the website, the person who answered was the accountant listed on the SMDC & Associates website, Bharat Bhatt. He refused to comment other than saying that Dela Cruz is off-island and that they have started the project "about two months or one-and-a-half months ago."

Senate Vice President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian), chairman of the Tinian Legislative Delegation, when asked for comment, said he's not aware of the online solicitation.

"I hope it's a legitimate program they are advertising and I hope they comply with all regulations before they start soliciting money for their cause," he said.

OAG plan

A Nov. 8, 2010 memo purportedly from the Tinian Municipal Council is posted on the website, stating that SMDC & Associates is "held under the auspices of the Tinian Municipal Council."

The memo, signed by council acting chair Joseph SN. Cruz, also states that SMDC & Associates shall provide an annual financial report to the Office of the Attorney General and a quarterly report to the Tinian Municipal Council.

Cruz, as well as Tinian Municipal Council chair Patrick A. Manglona, could not be reached for comment.

The memo also says the charity shall

also make a monthly deposit to the Bank of Guam account of the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Fund.

Besides saying that the OAG does not endorse or review revenues for SMDC & Associates' Your Happy Life, Buckingham also said that the OAG plans to proceed as follows:

1. Contact this organization to stop using the "Office of the Attorney General" name.
2. Request this organization provide documentation of exactly what and to whom they believe they have reported information to the Office of the Attorney General.
3. Contact the Tinian Municipal Council so the OAG can coordinate a search of names along with a review with the Registrar of Corporations.
4. Advise the Office of the Public Auditor of this situation.
5. Advise the public of the results of our actions and review.

Peace movement

SMDC & Associates seeks to help "underserved and disadvantaged children from their dangerous and apocalyptic life" by soliciting money online from those who also want to help these children.

It also said to continue generating revenue for the children, it will build a commercialized, 1,700-foot peace memorial tower "on the U.S. island of Tinian where America had initiated a defensive action that ended World War II."

Tinian was the launching site for the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, helping to end the war.

SMDC & Associates chair Serafin M. Dela Cruz, in a message posted on the website, says their hope is to build the first tower on American landscape "to lure in active tourists group from Asia."

It said Tinian is a perfect place to build the peace tower because of its role in the war.

"Having a peace memorial tower will also honor those men and women who gave their life for peace and freedom of the world," he said.

Dela Cruz said their goal is to help not only the over 15 million children in the United States, but also to reach out "to all disadvantaged and underserved children everywhere in the world."

HIRING

From Page 1

er senate joint resolutions to approve requests from the Criminal Justice and Planning Agency, Department of Public Lands, three FTEs for the Rota Health Center, and Tinian's Department of Finance, Department of Public Safety, and Tinian Health Center.

Also adopted by the House were at least nine other House joint resolutions, most of which also got the Senate approval on the same day, paving the way for these agencies to fill in vacancies.

During the House session, members debated briefly on Saipan Mayor Donald Flores' requests for hiring. At first, the House adopted an amended resolution that removed from the list of ap-

proved positions to be filled a special adviser to the mayor.

When Flores was called in to explain the need for the position, Flores said while the job title is for a special adviser, the position is actually for the administrator of the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance because SHEFA does not have an approved FTE position yet. The House later on approved the position, but in another resolution.

The Senate, during its session, also adopted House joint resolutions that approved the hiring of employees to fill vacancies at the following agencies: three at the Department of Public Works, Commerce-Tinian, Office of Personnel Management, 21 at the Department of Corrections, Judiciary, and Saipan Mayor's Office.

SENATE

From Page 1

cause the bill was not on the House session agenda and did not meet the 24-hour public notice.

Another House session may be called this week to act on the smoking bill.

Tina Sablan, program manager of the Commonwealth Cancer Association, said expanding the areas where smoking can be allowed "is a step backward," although not as big as what could have been had the Senate passed the House measure.

Sablan, along with other proponents of a smoke-free community who attended the Senate and House sessions, said it was appalling that the Senate passed Crisostimo's bill even before it asked for public comment on the bill during the session.

In a statement, the former representative said both the House and the Senate bills indicate that economic reasons are the primary force behind the effort to expand smoking areas in the CNMI but neither bill cites any studies to show that the CNMI's Smoke-Free Air Act has had any negative economic impact on the hospitality industry, or

on any other industry.

Crisostimo's bill also wants majority of the designated smoking rooms to be in the same section or wing of each hotel.

"In case there is more than one floor/wing, these rooms must be contiguous as the case may be. Smoke from the designated smoking rooms shall not infiltrate into areas where smoking is prohibited under the provisions of this ordinance," the bill states.

Under the CNMI's sweeping anti-smoking law, smoking is prohibited in government facilities, all enclosed areas, and outdoor areas within 25 feet of any doorway entrance or exit to a government facility.

It also bans smoking in all enclosed areas of public places, including areas available to the general public and other common-use areas.

An amendment to the existing anti-smoking law is one of three priority legislation that the Fitial administration and the Legislature agreed on.

The first one—a \$6.2 million incentive program for tour agents bringing in additional tourists from Osaka and Nagoya during so-called death valley periods—passed the House and Senate during back-to-back sessions on Friday. It's now headed to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial for action.

Luncheon for Mori reelection raises \$11,000

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
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REPORTER

Government officials led by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, along with representatives from the business community, flocked to the Fiesta Resort & Spa's Hibiscus Hall to show their support for Emanuel "Manny" Mori's in a fundraising luncheon last Jan. 28.

Mori, who is the current president of the Federated States of Micronesia, is running for Chuuk senator at-large during the next FSM general election slated for March 8.

Organized by the Committee to Elect Mori, the event was able to raise \$11,000 worth of tickets in ad-

dition to donations from various business establishments and individuals amounting to \$3,500.

Committee member Marcia Ayuyu said it took them three weeks to raise the money by selling the tickets.

According to Ayuyu, a total of 250 tickets were printed and priced at \$50 per couple and \$35 per individual.

"We're very happy and grateful because we exceeded our goal of \$10,000. But we're not finished yet," Ayuyu told *Saipan Tribune*, adding that the committee still plans to hold other fundraising activities for Mori's campaign this February.

Other committee members include Esther Fleming, Maggie Sablan, Tee and Isamu Abraham, Dicta Tenorio, Jimmy

Sablan, Elvira Seman, Jimbo Blanco, Marian Tudela, and Rose Hocog.

Fitial, who worked with Mori in the Micronesian Chief Executives Summit and sold 40 couples tickets, said in his remarks that the CNMI is willing to assist a "friend" who is up against opponents "with deeper pockets" in the March election.

Mori said he is very grateful to all those who worked hard in making the fundraising event an "astounding success."

"I thank each and every one of you for showing up and giving me support, financial and more," said Mori as he addressed his supporters.

With the financial and moral support of the governor, the lieutenant

governor, and the rest of the committee, Mori said he is more confident than ever that his reelection bid would be successful.

According to Mori, the FSM, CNMI, and other Micronesian islands should work together to address a lot of critical and pressing issues affecting them, including climate change, invasive species, transportation, and communication.

"The effects would be enormous and devastating if we don't take action," warned Mori.

Chuukese community meeting

After the luncheon, the committee also organized a President for Mass at 6pm at Kristo Rai Church followed

by a meeting with the Chuukese community on Saipan at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

About 70 Chuukese on island listened to Mori discuss his re-election platform which gives priority to education, private sector, infrastructure, transportation and communication, and alternative energy for his native land.

Mori reminded the Chuukese community to cast their votes through absentee ballots, some of which have already arrived by mail.

It would take about a week for the absentee ballots to reach Chuuk, he said.

"Vote for the right person, and that is me," added Mori.

Mwar fetches \$1K at fundraising

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

Given the right crowd and good auctioneers, a Saipan mwar or head lei could fetch \$100, \$400, or even \$1,000.

This was the case at a fundraising for Federated States of Micronesia President Emanuel "Manny" Mori's reelection for Chuuk senator at-large in the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort & Spa in Garapan on Friday.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, one of the auctioneers, offered Mori's mwar for a starting bid of \$200. It was later offered to a bidder for \$800, but was later toppled by a \$1,000 bid.

The bidding started when Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos stood up from the VIP table after lunch and went to the podium to announce that the fundraising committee was short by \$500 to meet its target. He said to help raise funds and make up for the shortfall, three items would be auctioned off—his mwar and that of Fitial's and Mori's.

Inos offered his mwar for a starting bid of \$50. A few bids and lots of laughter later, including when he joked there would be payroll early this week so the audience would be able to afford to bid, Inos' mwar went to the highest bidder—Maribel Loste—who

offered \$100.

Fitial's turn came in next. He stood at the podium and jokingly said, "I don't want to hear every bid, I will just assign (bids)," and the crowd of mostly businessmen and government officials erupted in laughter.

The governor offered his mwar for a starting bid of \$100. The bids came in slow in the first few minutes but Fitial was able to sell his mwar for \$400 to the highest bidder—Triple J Enterprises corporate auditor Mike Sablan.

When Mori's turn came, he only stood beside Fitial who served as the auctioneer, given his success in selling his own mwar.

Fitial raised the stakes by opening the bid at \$200. Again, it took time for the crowd to warm up to the third

and final round. At one point, first lady Josie Fitial offered a bid but the governor went on to offer Mori's mwar.

When still not satisfied with the offers, the governor upped his sales pitch when he said Chuuk is known for magic, and Mori's mwar has magic. "You can do anything with it," he said, and the crowd laughed with him.

At one point, McDonald's franchise owner Joe Ayuyu offered a bid but the governor wanted more so he offered the mwar with "Big Macs."

When the tempo picked up, the bid reached \$800 courtesy of Ben Sablan, a member of the Commonwealth Ports Authority board of directors. But when he stood up to claim his mwar, he said he's giving way to Radiocom owner Lee Ganacias whose bid was \$1,000.

The fundraising committee later said they're happy to raise \$1,500—much more than the \$500 they were originally aiming for. The committee said their overall collection was a little over \$30,000, including the amount they raised at the auction and luncheon.

Mori, in an interview with reporters, said he hopes Chuukese in the CNMI will vote for him during the March 2011 election.

Hours after the fundraising, Mori attended the 6pm Mass at the Kristo Rai Church in Garapan, and then met with the Chuukese Community at the Multi-Purpose Center. Early in the day, he dropped by the Hopwood Junior High School right before the start of Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's ceremonial swearing-in.



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Ofisinan I Gubietno
Dipattamenton I Tano' Pubpliku

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE EXTENSION FOR PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (a) and (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to recommend the extension of a lease on certain public land in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. This lease extension is subject to the approval of the Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Legislature in accordance with the mandate set out in Article XI, § 5(c) of the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

- i. The leased premises is described as public land Lot No. 151 R 01, containing an area of approximately 8,049 square meters, more or less, situated in Sabana, Rota. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands for inspection.
- ii. The lessee is Micronesian Telecommunications Corporation d.b.a. IT&E, a CNMI Corporation. The Board of Directors of the Corporation are Ricardo C. Delgado, Jovino G. Lorenzo, Jr., Jose Ricardo PR Delgado, E. Norbert Garrett, Robert R. Anderson, Jose S. Dela Cruz, John Noel Doherty, Keiji Ikemura, and Masao Miyamoto.

The President of the Corporation is Jose Ricardo PR Delgado. The Treasurer is Lawrence P. Knecht. The Secretary is Fe D. Vicencio.

- iii. The proposed lease extension was negotiated by Mr. Lawrence P. Knecht.

- iv. The lessee shall continue to use the premises solely for the purpose of maintaining and operating telecommunications transmitters, antennas, and activities related thereto.

The term of the lease agreement extension is 15 years.

- v. Copies of the proposed lease extension agreements may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; in Songsong, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.

- vi. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public lands in Sabana, Rota.

- vii. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before February 4, 2011 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

NOTISIA POT MAPROPONEN INEKSTENDEN INATKILON TANO' PUPBLIKU

Sigun gi Seksiona 106(a) yan (b) gi Lain Pubpliku 15-2, i Dipattamenton Tano' Pubpliku guini ha nã'i notisia ni intesion-ña para u rekomenda i inekstenden inatkilon gi pumalu na tãno' pupbliku siha giya Saipan, Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Isla Marianas siha. Este na inekstenden atkilon siha manmasuheto para i inapruiban i Lehislaturan Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Islan Marianas gi sigun ni mamãnda ni mapega huyong gi Attikilu XI, § 5(c) gi Konstitusion i Sangkat-tan na Islan Marianas siha. Maseha hãyi na petsona siha gi halom i pupbliku henerãt siña ha na'hãlom i imfotmasion, opiñon, pat testamoñon kinentra siha gi tinahguen propositu siha ni para i atkilon tãno' pupbliku. Sigi mãs mo'na mapribeniyi ginen i Lain Pubpliku 15-2, i tinattitiyi pettanesen imfotmasion ni madimãnda ni debi na u mapupblika.

- i. I lugãt atkilon siha madeskribe komu tano' pupbliku Lot No. 151 R 01, kinonsiste ãrian kãsi guaha 8,049 square meters, potlumenus mãs, ni gaige gi Sabãna Luta. I kopian i pumalu na lugãt gaige na gumuaha gi Dipattamenton Tano' Pubpliku siha ni para i rikonosimiento.
- ii. I manatikikila i Micronesian Telecommunications Corporation d.b.a. IT & E, i CNMI na Korporasion. I Kuetpon i Direktot siha gi Korporasion si Ricardo C. Delgado, Jovino G. Lorenzo, Jr., Jose Ricardo PR Delgado, E. Norbert Garrett, Robert R. Anderson, Jose S. Dela Cruz, John Noel Doherty, Keiji Ikemura, yan si Masao Miyamoto.

I Presidenten i Korporasion si Ricardo PR Delgado. I Tresurãrio si Lawrence P. Knecht. I Sekritãrio si Fe D. Vecencio.

- iii. I mapropone na ekstension atkilon manegosio gi as Siñot Lawrence P. Knecht.

- iv. I manatikikila debi na u kontinua umusa i lugãt siha uniku para i rason i maneran maintaining yan operating telecommunications transmitters, antennas yan maseha hãfa na mana'achule' na aktibidãt siha guihi.

I teman i kontrãtan atkilon ha ekstende gi 15 ãños.

- v. Kopian i manmapropone na ekstension atkilon na kontrãta siha siña machule' gi ofisinan i Dipattamenton Tano' Pubpliku siha, gaige gi segundo bibienda 2nd floor gi Joeten Dandan Commercial Building giya Dandan, Saipan; Songsong, Luta; pat i primet 1st floor gi Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.

- vi. I Dipattamenton Tano' Pubpliku siha tãya' ha risibi tinahguen propositu siha para suheton atkilon tãno' pupbliku siha gi Sabãna, Luta.

- vii. I Sekritãrion i Dipattamenton Tano' Pubpliku siha debi na u akseptã i tinige' i imfotmasion, opiñon yan testamoñon kinentra pat tinahguen propositu siha ginen i manggai interes na pattida siha gi pat ãntes di Fibreru 4, 2011 gi ofisinan Dipattamenton Tano' Pubpliku siha ni gaige Saipan, Luta, pat Tinian.

ARONGORONG REEL POMWOL AKKILONUL FALÚWEER TOULAP

Sãngi Tãlil ye 106 (b) mellól Alléghúl Toulap 15-2, Bwulasiyool Ammwilil Falúweer Toulap ekke atotoowow ammataf igha ebwe akkilaaló eghús falúw mellól Seipel, Commonwealth Téél Falúwasch Marianas. Akkilon yeel nge ebwe mwir sangi alughulughul Sow Ffeerul Allegh mellol Commonwealth Northern Mariana Islands iye e alléghewow mellól Article XI, Tãlil 5(c) mellól Allégh Lapalap Northern Mariana Islands. Schóókka eyoor máfiyeer nge rebwe isisilong aghiyghiir, awewee, aingiingil reel pomwol akkilonul ammwelil falúweer toulap mebwal Alléghúl Toulap ye 15-2, e ayoora, lamal awewee kka rebwe mweiti ngáli milikka ebwe akkatééló.

- i. Pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap nge ekke bwáári Lot No. 151 R 01, ebwe eyoor walangaras ebwughuw faigh me tiwoow (8, 049), elapeló me ngäre eghús, elo Sabana Luuta. Tilighial bwuley yeel nge eyoor mereel Bwulasiyool Falúweer Toulap (Public Lands) ngäre óubwe ghuley fischiy.
- ii. Schéschéél schóól akkilon nge Micronesian Corporation d.b.a. IT&E CNMI Corporation. Mwiischil assamwool kkaal mellol Corporation nge Richard C. Delgado, Juvino G. Lorenzo, Jr., Jose Ricardo PR Delgado, E. Norbert Garrett, Robert R. Anderson, Jose S. Dela Cruz, John Noel Doherty, Keiji Ikemura, me Masao Miyamoto.

Samwoolul Corporation nge Jose Ricardo PR Delgado. Treasurer nge Lawrence P. Knecht. Sekkeretoria nge Fe D. Vicencio

- iii. Schóól aweweel pomwol akkilon ye e sobwosobw nge Mr Lawrence P. Knecht.

- iv. Schóól akkilon ebwe ammwela bwuley me ayoora Telecommunications transmitters, antennas, me lamal kka eyoor Tool aighúghúl pomwol akkilon nge reweigh me limoow ráágh (25 years)

- v. Tilighial akkilon yeel nge emmwel óubwe bwughi mereel bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap, elo aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) me Joeten Dandan Commercial Building Ilol Tuturam, Seipél; aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) mellól Songsong, Luuta; me ngäre mmwal pwó (1st floor) mellól Kings Commercial Building, Tchúlúyól.

- vi. Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge esáál bweibwogh mwo pomwol akkilon ye elo Lower Base, Seipel..

- vii. Samwoolul Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge ebwe bwughil ischil mángemáng, aingiingil mereel amweyút mmwal Määischigh (February) 4, 2011 mellól Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap iye elo Seipél, Luuta, Tchúlúyól.

NORTHERN ISLANDS’ MAJOR CHALLENGES

Govt shutdown, limited funding

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Limited funding and the government shutdown became the major challenges for the Northern Islands Mayor’s Office in the last quarter of 2010.

In its latest report submitted to the governor, the NIMO stated that they managed to survive with what was left in their budget from the first through the third quarters of 2010.

“Funding may have slowed down the pace of the NIMO’s plans but it did not stop it from pursuing its goals of reviving the Northern Islands so that it may be a safe and better place for its people,” said in the report.

Since funding is a concern, the NIMO said they are grateful to the *Blue Marlin*, a long-liner vessel that provided them assistance by bringing supplies to and occasionally transporting the Northern Islands residents.

“However, the NIMO understands the cost of fuel and is willing to work with these vessels to further assist the Northern Islands by paying

them with what little funds it has to continue the good working relationship,” it added.

According to the report, the NIMO was affected by the government shutdown in October for the Legislature’s failure to pass the fiscal year 2011 budget on time and the payless paydays that ensued.

Despite the shutdown, two NIMO employees reported to work to continue communication with the Northern Islands residents by phone and radio “regardless of not being paid.”

With the cooperation and assistance of the Department of Public Lands, NIMO said they look forward to the implementation of Public Law 16-50 or the Northern Island Homestead Act of 2008.

The measure, authored by former Reps. Justo S. Quitugua, Oscar M. Babauta, and Joseph N. Camacho, said there are public lands available in the Northern Islands that may be designated by the Department of Public Lands for village and agricultural homesteading programs, and for public facilities and commercial activities to meet

the needs of the residents of Northern Islands.

“The DPL is aware of this law and has provided its willingness to assist the NIMO in its effort to afford the Northern Islands residents the opportunity to avail to the said program,” the report said.

The NIMO also aims to work on reviving the Pagan Airstrip which has not been realized due to lack of funding.

“Hopefully the CPA would have the needed funding in Fiscal Year 2011 so that the airstrip could be upgraded so the NIMO and the Northern Islands could avail to it,” the report stated.

Other projects that the NIMO aims to accomplish include the designation of 5,000 square meters of public land for a multi-purpose center, bringing more residents to the Northern Islands to meet the 1,000 population requirement to become a senatorial district, seeking federal funds for the development of the Northern Islands, and having the mayor authorized to receive permit fees for fishing and hunting licenses on Goat Island.

IN RACKETEERING LAWSUIT AGAINST ATTY. QUICHOCHO, WIFE

Federal judge: Investor cured prior deficiencies in some of her claims

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_deltorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court has ruled that an investor who sued a lawyer and his wife of allegedly engaging in corporate hijacking racketeering, has cured the prior deficiencies in some of the claims in her lawsuit.

U.S. District Court for the NMI visiting judge Mark W. Bennett denied the motion to dismiss filed by defendants attorney Ramon K. Quichocho and his wife, Frances C. Quichocho, as to plaintiff Jung Ja Kim’s two claims pursuant to the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO).

Bennett also denied the Quichocho couple’s motion to dismiss Kim’s common-law fraud claim against them.

The judge, however, granted the couple’s motion to dismiss the common-law fraud claim against Mr. Quichocho’s law office, and their company Karissa LLC.

Bennett granted the Quichocho couple’s motion to dismiss Kim’s RICO conspiracy claim against the defendants. The judge, however, will allow Kim to amend the claim within 30 days of the order.

Kim’s lawsuit alleged that defendants Quichocho couple, Quichocho law offices, and Karissa LLC defrauded her of two of her poker businesses

under the guise of protecting her from litigation by her former husband and his family and helping her through a period of depression.

Kim asserted nine causes of action: Acquisition of an enterprise through a pattern of racketeering activity, a pattern of racketeering activity, RICO conspiracy, legal malpractice resulting from professional negligence, legal malpractice resulting from breach of fiduciary duty, breach of lease agreements, conversion, fraud, and creation of a constructive trust.

In April 2010, the federal court dismissed three of Kim’s nine claims. The judge, however, allowed the businesswoman to amend her complaint.

Kim, through counsels Colin Thompson and Robert T. Torres, later filed an amended complaint that asserts the same nine causes of action against the same defendants.

The defendants, through counsel Michael Dotts, later filed another motion to dismiss the four claims pertaining to RICO and common-law fraud in the amended complaint.

The motion hearing was held on Nov. 17, 2010.

Dotts asserted that Kim’s repleaded RICO claims still fail to plead either predicate RICO offenses or a pattern or racketeering activity, because

Kim has not followed the “roadmap” for repleading her claims laid out for her in the court’s prior order.

Kim’s counsels, however, argued that she had repleaded her RICO claims in sufficient detail.

In his order issued last week, Bennett concluded that, while not perfect, Kim’s amended complaint sufficiently alleges the requirements of her RICO claims.

Bennett said wire fraud, as a predicate act of racketeering activity, has now been pleaded in a way that meets the heightened particularity requirements of Rule 9(b).

The judge said Kim has also now adequately pleaded predicate offenses of money laundering.

Bennett said Kim has now alleged the necessary pattern of racketeering activity.

Bennett agreed with Kim that her amended complaint does repeatedly allege that, as a result of the defendants’ misconduct, the defendants have obtained, and Kim has lost, ownership and control of companies Tan Dingo and Latte Stone.

With respect to the fraud claim, the judge said in light of Kim’s express concession that no common-law fraud claim was intended against Karissa and the law office, the claim will be dismissed against them.

Saipan to host 2011 Western Pacific airports conference

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority this year will host a five-day conference involving various airports in the Western Pacific region.

CPA executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero said the 2011 Western Pacific Directors Airports Conference will be held on Saipan from April 5 to 9 at the Fiesta Resort & Spa.

The event is expected to be graced by Micronesian airport officials and representatives from the Federal Aviation Administration.

Deleon Guerrero said among the event's activities are presentations from industry, FAA headquarters, regional representatives on various subjects including airport operations, airport planning, airport improvement program

funding, environmental issues, pavement management, and airport security.

Last year, the event was hosted by the Hawaii ports authority after the successful conduct of the event in Palau the year before.

Deleon Guerrero said more than a 100 guests and presenters are expected on the occasion, which aim to update Micronesian officials on the latest about airports operation, security, and regulations.

"This is a very important event for each and every airport in the region because FAA will be spending a lot of time discussing vital issues beneficial to all airports," said Deleon Guerrero.

The executive director claims that CPA, in providing technical assistance to all Micronesian airports, has been a "model" to its neighboring islands.

Just recently, he disclosed that CPA inked a memorandum of agreement with both FAA and regional airports to provide assistance in completing airports training requirements and operations manual.

"I can say that CPA has always been in the forefront in trying to assist the Micronesian airports. Just recently, we signed an MOU to provide certification training for them and develop their operations and training manuals," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said CPA's aircraft rescue firefighting center is considered the model ARFF training center for Micronesia, including Guam.

CPA, along with other Pacific region airports, receives millions of dollars annually in federal assistance from FAA—through its airport improvement program—

for the planning and development of its three airports.

Saipan Tribune learned that in the past 10 years, over \$955

million or nearly \$1 billion in airport improvement project funds were issued by FAA to the Pacific Islands airports covering

the period of fiscal years 2000 through 2009. From the figure, \$658 million was issued in fiscal years 2004 through 2009.

Woman arrested for assaulting husband gets 10-day jail term

A woman who was arrested last May for allegedly hitting her husband with a broomstick after he refused to give her money so she could play poker, has entered a guilty plea.

Ya Hong Bai Indalecio, 37, pleaded guilty to disturbing the peace.

Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja accepted Indalecio's guilty plea and the plea agreement.

Naraja sentenced Indalecio to 30 days in prison, all suspended except for the 10 days and five hours she had already served in jail.

Naraja placed the defendant on probation for three months and permitted her to depart the CNMI during that period after she completes her anger management counseling class.

The judge prohibited the defendant from having direct or indirect contact with her husband.

Indalecio was required to pay a \$25 court assessment fee.

The Office of the Attorney General charged the defendant with assault with a dangerous weapon, assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

The defendant entered a plea

agreement. For pleading guilty to disturbing the peace, the remaining charges were dismissed.

The victim told police that the defendant asked money from the victim, who refused because of her addiction to poker.

Indalecio got mad, grabbed a broomstick and started hitting the husband with it.

The husband ran outside of their apartment and proceeded to a store where he called the police. Police officers arrived at the apartment where they arrested the defendant. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)



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INVITATION FOR BID NMHC IFB 2011-R-001

(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds)

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, hereby give notice that NMHC is soliciting sealed bids for the **Construction of the Saipan Leadership Memorial Kios Ku Project, Phase III**, in Chalan Kanoa Village District No. 2 in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project package consisting of Scope of Work, Technical Specifications, Plans and Bid Documents will be available on or after Friday, January 21, 2011, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250.00) is required for each set. Payment shall be by money order or cashier's check (payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation).

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference" as amended by Public Law 15-95 and further amended by Public Law 15-118, is **not available** to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

Bidders are also advised that this project is subject to compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act. All wage rates for laborers, mechanics and all other employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid the current minimum wage or the wage determination for the Commonwealth as specified in CM20100001 for the Mariana Islands.

A **pre-bid conference** will be held at **10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 1, 2011**, at the proposed project site in Chalan Kanoa, Saipan, across the U.S. Post Office, and all interested bidders will be given the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the required work and ask questions regarding the project. Attendance at this conference and site visit are considered essential to the bidders' understanding of the project elements and a company that does not have a representative in attendance at the pre-bid conference will be considered as a non-responsive bidder.

Sealed Bids must be marked "**NMHC IFB 2011-R-001**". For bidders within the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director, Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than **10:00 a.m., local time, Tuesday, February 22, 2011**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:00 a.m., local time, February 22, 2011 and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515 or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside of the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U. S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than February 22, 2011 AND must be received by Procurement and Supply no later than March 1, 2011. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. local time, Wednesday, March 2, 2011. However, if no Notices of Intent to Bid are received from bidders outside of the CNMI, the bids will be opened at 10:30 a.m., local time, February 22, 2011.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00), a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. This security may be in the form of a Certified Check, Cashier's Check, or Bid Bond. Checks must be made payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC), with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Saipan Leadership Memorial Kios Ku Project, Phase III". Surety companies must hold a Certificate of Authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General.

The bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the NMIAC §70.30.3.301 of the CNMI Procurement Regulations. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with NMHC and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment Bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than \$25,000. Pursuant to Governor's Directive 251 dated March 15, 2006, bidders are required to include a Clearance from the Office of the Insurance Commissioner with respect to the financial bonding capability of the bidders' chosen Surety. In addition, the contractor will be required to deliver a certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments or other bond obligations) exceeded the penal amount of each bond.

Performance time for completion of this project is One Hundred Fifty (150) calendar days upon issuance of an official written Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages for the delays beyond the established completion date will be assessed at Two Hundred Dollars (US\$200.00) per calendar day.

This project is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant, American Recovery and Reinvestment (CDBG-R) funding provided to the Commonwealth that mandates ALL MATERIALS PURCHASED AND INCORPORATED INTO THE BUILDING/WORK MUST BE MANUFACTURED OR PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

This project which goal is to provide economic stimulus as well as jobs creation is also subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires recipients of HUD funds and the contractors to help insure that the economic opportunities generated by these HUD funds are provided to local low-income residents and the businesses that serve them "to the maximum extent feasible."

NMHC hereby notifies bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, women and small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, and disability status.

The Government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any defects in the said proposals, if in the sole opinion of NMHC, to do so would be in its best interest. All proposals will become the property of the Government.

/s/ Marcie M. Tomokane
Board Chairwoman & Contracting Officer

/s/ Herman S. Sablan, Director
Division of Procurement & Supply



NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.



INVITATION FOR BIDS WATER TASK FORCE IFB11-GOV-002



Governor Benigno R. Fitial, through the CNMI Water Task Force, are soliciting sealed bids for the TP-1 WATER WELL and WATER LINE CONNECTION in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A bid guarantee of 15 percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of the Treasury (T-Listed).

The Contractor will be required to submit payment and performance bonds from a US Treasury listed company. The Contractor will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal laws including the Davis Bacon Act.

This project is funded by a grant from the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA), Department of the Interior. The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the project approval from OIA.

The project consists, in general, but is not limited to:

- 1,700 linear feet of 4" diameter water main and appurtenances
- Installation of one wellhead plumbing system, with pump/motor, drop pipe, power line, etc.
- Well pump installation
- Construction of one electrical control building with fencing, gates and slab
- Connection to the existing valving at the Capitol Hill Reservoir

Construct all work in strict accordance with the Plans and Specifications and subject to the terms and conditions of the Contract.

A non-refundable payment of \$300 to CNMI Treasury is required for each set of Plans, Specifications, and Proposal Forms, available on or after **January 10, 2011** at the Water Task Office, 1316 Anatahan Drive, Capitol Hill, Saipan. A mandatory pre-bid conference for this project is scheduled at **10:00 a.m., on January 21, 2011**, at the WTF Conference Room, Saipan. A project site visit will be made as a part of the pre-bid meeting.

All inquiries shall be in writing and addressed to Pedro Sasamoto, Program Manager, Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 or faxed to (670) 664-2279. Inquiries must be received no later than 4:30 PM on January 20, 2011.

Bidding Procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, contained in the CNMI Administrative Code, Title 70 Subchapter 70-30.3. Preference is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funds for this project.

Sealed bids must be marked "**IFB11-GOV-002**". For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 3:00 pm local time **February 8, 2011**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 3:00 pm local time **February 8, 2011**, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **February 8, 2011**, and must be received no later than **February 17, 2011**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 3:00 pm local time, **February 18, 2011**. However, if no Notices of Intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 3:00 pm local time on **February 9, 2011**.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/S/ Benigno R. Fitial,
Governor and Contracting Officer

/S/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement and Supply

ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT CLAIMS FILED BY FORMER STAFF

Palms Resort: Claims time barred disciplinary action was appropriate

The owner of Palms Resort Saipan said the claims of a former employee who filed a sexual harassment lawsuit against the hotel, are barred by the statute of limitations.

In its answer to Aida S. Kamruzzaman's lawsuit, Micronesian Resort Inc. said effective Oct. 11, 2010, all its hotel operations ceased and that Palms Resort Saipan closed.

"Plaintiff (Kamruzzaman) therefore cannot claim damages beyond Oct. 11, 2010," said attorney Michael Dotts, counsel for Micronesian Resort Inc.

Kamruzzaman, through counsel Colin M. Thompson, filed the lawsuit in federal court on Nov. 3, 2010 against Micronesia Resort, Inc. and 10 unnamed co-defendants, for allegedly not acting on her sexual harassment complaint against her then superior Habib Akbar.

But Dotts said Kamruzzaman has waived some of or all of her claims and lacks standing to present some or all of her claims.

The lawyer said the plaintiff has also failed to exhaust her administrative remedies before filing the lawsuit.

Dotts asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to rule that Kamruzzaman takes nothing by way of her complaint and that judgment be entered in favor of Micronesian Resort Inc.

Dotts requested the court to order the plaintiff to pay his client's costs of defense, expenses, and attorney's fees.

The defendant demanded a jury trial on all issues in the lawsuit.

Dotts said Micronesian Resort Inc. admits that after Kamruzzaman was informed of the company's disciplinary action

that then plaintiff made a claim of sexual harassment.

However, the lawyer pointed out, the company's position is that the disciplinary action was proper.

In her lawsuit, Kamruzzaman demanded damages, attorney's fees, and court costs. She also asked the court to enjoin Palms Resort and its officers or agents from engaging in any sexual harassment and discrimination.

The plaintiff requested the court to institute policies, practices, and programs which provide equal employment opportunities.

According to Thompson in the complaint, the defendants subjected Kamruzzaman in 2009 to sexual harassment so severe and pervasive that it altered the terms and conditions of her employment.

"The sexual harassment in-

cluded, but was not limited to, sexual advances, sexually charged and suggestive speech, and unwelcome physical contact by plaintiff's superior Chef Habib," Thompson said.

Thompson said in relation for Kamruzzaman's rejection of his advances, Akbar fabricated a complaint of misconduct about her and communicated the complaint to the hotel management.

The lawyer said his client denied the misconduct and explained to her supervisor about Akbar's sexual harassment.

Kamruzzaman also explained the complaint was retaliatory because she objected to Akbar's sexual advances.

Thompson said the management did not properly investigate plaintiff's complaint and took no disciplinary action against Akbar. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

Sharwater director to speak at Simon Sanchez

YIGO, Guam—The students of Simon A. Sanchez High School, home of the Sharks, will welcome filmmaker Rob Stewart to their campus today, Jan. 31, at 10:30am to discuss his documentary, *Sharkwater*, and raise awareness for the conservation of sharks and to promote the prevention of shark finning.

Stewart was invited to speak by the Sharks Making A Difference in the Environment (MADE) Club, a student organization. The presentation will take place in the SSHS cafeteria where principal Beth Perez

will make opening remarks and the Guam Legislature will present Stewart with a resolution recognizing his outstanding work in the field of animal protection rights. Student Body Association president Richard Duenas and Shark's MADE Club President Evelyn Quiel will also speak.

The Sharks MADE Club are excited to be able to offer students the opportunity to listen to a renowned expert like Stewart speak about the im-

portance of shark conservation, halting the massacre of sharks for their fins, and other environmental issues that affect our marine life. Stewart spent four years visiting 15 countries to film sharks and expose the illegal and often dangerous world of shark finning.

Organizers of this important event would like to thank principal Beth Perez and her administrative team; members of the Sharks MADE Club and their advisors Mrs.



Stewart

Blas, Ms. Cruz and Mr. Kamiaz; the Simon A. Sanchez High School SBA and its advisors Mr. Rick Leon Guerrero and Mrs. Acie Jo Cruz; SSHS Biology and Marine Biology students; Mrs. Karrie Runles and the SSHS Science Department; Captain Susuico and the JROTC Cadets; Mrs. Vicky Schrage's ProStart Class; and the Pew Environmental Group.

For more information, please contact Patrick Manibusan at Simon A. Sanchez High School at 653-2313 or by email at pmmanibusan@gdoe.net. (*PR*)

Charity reports support for Micronesian students

An American charity working in the Federated States of Micronesia released its annual report recently, detailing support provided to schools and students over the last year.

The Habele Outer Island Fund is a U.S.-based nonprofit organization established in 2006

by a group of former Peace Corps Volunteers.

In 2010 the organization provided tuition scholarships to 21 students attending non-public elementary and high schools in the FSM. The scholarship winners came from Outer Islands and Lagoon Islands across the

States of Yap and Chuuk.

"We are excited to see demand for these scholarships grow," explained Marc McNamara, a Habele director. "We had more than three applications for each scholarship we could award this year. The interest is quite strong and the

students who've earned Habele scholarships are excelling in the classroom."

The K-12 tuition scholarships issued by Habele are a form of School Choice, extending access to private schools to middle and low-income families.

"It's about the best classroom for each student, and giving parents a way to get more involved in their child's education," noted McNamara.

The report highlighted data from the U.S. and FSM governments indicating student achievement and graduation rates at public schools in Micronesia have stagnated.

That's despite major financial aid from the U.S. government through the Compact of Free Association that links the two nations. The report also detailed Habele's development of a Uli-thian-English Dictionary.

The dictionary was created to support public school classroom teachers in the Outer Islands of Yap. The publication was the first of its kind and copies were widely distributed to educators across the State. The full annual report can be found online at www.habele.org. (*PR*)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 31, 2000

New harbor fees lift seaport revenues

Revenues generated by the marine division of the Commonwealth Ports Authority jumped by 20 percent in November 1999 compared with the previous year record, as a result of the new schedule of harbor fees implemented last year. CPA's seaport operations generated \$339,646, up from the previous year tally of \$285,000, according to a financial report presented during the CPA Board of Directors meeting in Rota Friday. Ports Authority Board Chair Roman S. Palacios said the increase was primarily fueled by the implementation of the new seaport fee schedule in July last year.

Gov't tightens entry of balut, salted eggs

If you're planning to import balut and salted eggs in large quantity from the Philippines, then you better think twice. The Department of Lands and Natural Resources has recently imposed a new regulation limiting the number of balut and salted eggs that can be brought from the Philippines or other Asian countries. Each passenger can bring in only 12 baluts and 12 salted eggs. According to Dr. Ignacio Dela Cruz, CNMI veterinarian, the restriction was primarily due to lack of manpower and equipment in the Quarantine Division to inspect huge quantities of these eggs which is meant to prevent the entry of hatching or viable eggs that may become the potential source of new diseases.

Jan. 31, 2001

OPA: Insurance firm padded bills

The NMI Retirement Fund lost an estimated \$313,516 on fraudulent claims and over \$500,000 in supported claims due to padded bills of physical therapy services rendered by Megapulse International CNMI, Inc. Based on the result of the audit investigation of health insurance payments to Megapulse International, the Office of the Public Auditor disclosed that NMIRF through its Group Health and Life Insurance Branch paid the company over \$800,000 on fraudulent health insurance claims of physical therapy services. Public Auditor Mike S. Sablan asked Fund Administrator Juan S. Torres to expedite the hiring of the review utilization board to prevent possible recurrence of this type of problem and the immediate preparation of guidelines for the review and processing of claims.

DPH: Flexible terms for indigent patients

The Department of Public Health yesterday disclosed the implementation of its Medically Indigent Assistance Plan to ensure the delivery of essential medical and health services to patients who do not have the capability to pay for them on one-time basis. The program helps patients pay medical services through the sliding fee scale program. According to Public Health Secretary Kevin P. Villagomez, the program is a schedule of discounts that would allow patients to pay a percentage of their bill depending on their financial ability. Mr. Villagomez explained that MIAP is part of the mission of the health department to provide quality medical care to residents of Northern Marianas regardless of their financial capacity.

Jan. 31, 2002

Army Corps to shut down PCB-treatment machine

The indirect thermal desorption unit used in treating PCB-laced soil in Tanapag would be shut down indefinitely after the proof of performance tests, giving the US Army Corps of Engineers and its contractor time to attend to needed maintenance work and address the dust problem created by the machine. This, as the US Environmental Protection Agency assured its local counterpart, the Division of Environmental Quality, that it will not allow operations of the ITD unit to resume until the Army Corps and its contractor, Environmental Chemical Corp, would have installed dust control measures. The EPA and the DEQ have reached an agreement in monitoring the treatment operations. Acting DEQ director Antonio I. DeLeon Guerrero confirmed this in a letter to Michelle Rogow, the EPA's on-scene coordinator for the treatment of soil in Tanapag.

Mall to be built near Saipan airport

The Commonwealth Ports Authority has approved the construction of a two-storey commercial building adjacent to the Saipan International Airport terminal, in line with the agency's efforts to generate additional revenue from its non-aviation operations. A group of Korean businessmen will build the commercial establishment, which will reportedly operate as a shopping mall.



ALL EARS

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Zoning administrator Douglas Wyatt, legal counsel Kate Fuller, and zoning planner Therese Ogumoro listen to Jesus L. Castro of Capitol Hill make a comment on the proposed amendments on the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008 during a public open house last Jan. 26 at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

Committee continues work on NMC president search

Continuing its work in helping to select the next president of Northern Marianas College, the members of the new Northern Marianas College Presidential Search Committee (PSC) met this week to discuss their progress as well as the next steps they will be taking in the search process.

According to Presidential Search Committee chairperson Andrew Orsini, the members have been focusing on and are preparing for the interview of

candidates, whose applications are currently being vetted by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT).

The ACCT is a national non-profit educational association that has assisted numerous other colleges and universities with their search for a CEO/president. The organization was tapped by the NMC Board of Regents to assist with the initial stages of the presidential search process.

“While the ACCT is current-

ly reviewing the applications that were submitted earlier this month, we’ve been diligently preparing for the next stage of the search, which is the interview phase,” Orsini said.

Orsini added that the committee members are formulating specific interview questions and creating a rating system by which the responses of the candidates will be evaluated. He also indicated that he will be meeting with representatives of ACCT via teleconfer-

ence in the next few days to discuss the formal transmittal of the presidential candidates from ACCT to the Presidential Search Committee.

“Because additional time is needed to meticulously screen the applicants, we also want to let the community know that we will need to adjust the timeline for identifying the final candidates,” added Orsini. “We want to ensure that the search is being conducted in the most expeditious manner, but without compromising the integrity of the search process. We will be announcing a more

detailed timeline within the next few days.”

“Nonetheless, I want to reassure everyone that we’re working hard to carry out this important task of helping to expediently select the next NMC president,” said Orsini. “We appreciate everyone’s understanding and we will continue to provide updates on our progress.”

In addition to chairperson Orsini, the other members of the Presidential Search Committee include: David Sablan, president, Century Insurance Company; John Oliver Gonzales, executive director, Joeten-

Kiyu Public Library and NMC alumnus; Jesus Elameto, retiree and former PSS administrator; Juanita Mendiola, former Tinian Municipal Council chairperson; Barbara Merfalen, dean, NMC Academic Programs and Services; and Antonio Tipples, president, Associated Students of the Northern Marianas College.

The Presidential Search Committee meets weekly and posts updates to the President Search page on the NMC website. Updates regarding the search can be viewed by visiting www.nmcnet.edu. (*NMC*)

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

FOA membership meeting tomorrow

The Friends of the Arts will be holding its next membership meeting tomorrow, Feb. 1, at the Canton Chinese Restaurant in Garapan. A delicious Chinese buffet will open the program at 6:30pm with entertainment starting at 7pm or shortly thereafter, followed by a brief run-down of FOA business, to include announcement and tickets for our upcoming Valentine’s Day musical, “I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change” and an audition call for its April program, “The Three Musketeers.” The cost is \$15 for adult members of FOA (age 12 and above) and guests, \$8 for children (age 4-12) and no charge for children younger than 4 years. (*PR*)

SSHS report cards out soon

To all parents and legal guardians of Saipan Southern High School students, Term 2 Report Cards are scheduled to be picked up on Thursday, Feb. 3, 2011, from 3-6pm, at the counseling office. All students will be released at 1pm. (*PR*)

Cancer survivorship survey

The Asian & Pacific Islander National Cancer Survivors Net-

work is asking all self-identified Asian-American and Pacific Islander cancer survivors to participate in a confidential survey that will be used to assess the psychosocial needs of Asian-American and Pacific Islander cancer survivors across the nation. The information gathered will be used for research on cancer survivorship among Asian-American and Pacific Islander communities, and will help tailor and/or advocate for culturally relevant and appropriate programs and services. The survey takes approximately 20-30 minutes to fill out, and participants must be 18 years of age or older.

Any questions or concerns should be directed to the principal investigator, Dr. Giang Nguyen, at 215-615-0355, or Dr. Mai-Nhung Le at mainhung@sfsu.edu.

The survey can be found at www.aapihealth.org/study. If you are a self-identified Asian-American and/or Pacific Islander cancer survivor, take the time to fill out this important survey. (*PR*)

Survivors, caregivers support meeting

The next support meeting for cancer survivors and caregivers is on Feb. 23, 2011, starting at 5:30pm. Location and presen-

tation topic to be announced later. For more information or to RSVP, contact the Commonwealth Cancer Association at 682-0050 or cca@ccamarianas.org. (*PR*)

Join PIC Duck Race for Cancer

On Feb. 19, the Pacific Islands Club Saipan will once again host the popular 2011 Duck Race for Cancer, starting at 6pm. The Sports, Entertainment, & Activities staff will be selling ducks to the community to raise funds for the fight against cancer. Previous Duck Races for Cancer raised a combined total of \$10,000. Ducks cost \$5 apiece, and the grand prize is \$1,000 in cash, followed by \$300 and \$200 for the 2nd and 3rd place winners, respectively.

This year, PIC is adding a Corporate Category, and is inviting businesses to participate in the PIC Race Around the River. The first 16 companies to confirm will be granted slots in the corporate race.

For more information, contact Dennis Tababa, sports manager/race director at 235-6231, Ext. 5173, or email sportsmanager@picsaipan.com. (*PR*)

D. Rik Villegas and F. Janel Villegas
P.O. Box 1867
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No. 235-7458

PRO SE

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF
THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

**IN RE THE MATTER
OF PETITION
FOR ADOPTION OF:**

M. H. V.
Minor Child

By

**DANIEL RIK
VILLEGAS and
FLOVE JANEL
VILLEGAS**
Petitioners

**FCD AD
CIVIL
ACTION
NO. 11-0042**

**NOTICE
OF
HEARING**


PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Adoption of the above-named minor child by D. Rik Villegas and F. Janel Villegas was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court..

A HEARING of said petition for Adoption will held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Guma Hustisia Building, Susupe, Saipan, NMI, before the Honorable Perry B. Inos on the 14th day of February, 2011 at 1:30 P.M. or as soon as thereafter.

Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court


By:
/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS



Happy 4th birthday to our baby Joshua Kisa! Wishing you good health and all the best! Lots of love from your Dad, Mom, and Kuya Joseph.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Belated happy birthday to Katherine Norech, who celebrated her very special day on Saturday. We hope you had a great birthday and wish you many beautiful years to come. Love you always, pwipwii Jo and Jen and the entire family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Pacific Marine & Industrial Corporation (PMIC), Power Plant 4 (PP4) is soliciting competitive proposals from qualified construction firm in the island for:

- CONSTRUCTION OF:
- NEW SECONDARY CONTAINMENT BERM FOR HIGH SPEED DIESEL ENGINE AND TRANSFORMER AREA
 - NEW FUEL PIPELINE SECONDARY CONTAINMENT BERM
 - IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING BERMS INSIDE THE POWER PLANT 4 FACILITY LOCATED AT CHALAN PALE ARNOLD ROAD, PUERTO RICO, SAIPAN CNMI.

Interested firms are required to submit proposals to PMIC PP4 Office outlining their ability to supply EQUIPMENTS, MANPOWER and MATERIALS for the above mentioned projects.

Site inspection and copies of the BERM Engineering Drawing can be picked up at PMIC PP4 facility site from Monday to Friday from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Deadline for submission of proposals is on February 2, 2011. Target date for the start of work is on February 14, 2011.

Proposed completion of the project is on March 15, 2011.

For more information, contact:

Richard Cano Plant Manager Tel. (670) 322-6187	Carlito J. Marquez Improvement Project Manager Tel. (670) 322-6181
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Pacific Marine & Industrial Corporation (PMIC), Power Plant 4 (PP4) is soliciting competitive proposals from qualified Environmental/Construction firm in the island for:

DRAFTING OF WORK PLAN FOR THE UPGRADING OF THE EXISTING OIL / WATER SEPARATOR LEACHING FIELD LOCATED AT PMIC PP4 FACILITY

Interested firms are required to submit proposals to PMIC PP4 Facility Office outlining their ability to draft a Work Plan for the upgrading of the existing Oil Water Separator Leaching Field including the scope of work, and schedule of implementation following all Federal Rules and Regulations applicable to the job (on-site)

Deadline for submission of proposals is on February 7, 2011. Proposed completion of the Work Plan is on February 28, 2011.

For more information, contact:

Richard V. Cano Plant Manager Tel. (670) 322-6187	Carlito J. Marquez Improvement Project Manager Tel. (670) 322-6181
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Pacific Marine & Industrial Corporation (PMIC), Power Plant 4 (PP4) is soliciting competitive proposals from qualified Environmental/Construction firm in the island for:

DRAFTING OF WORK PLAN FOR THE INTEGRITY TESTING AND UPGRADING OF EXISTING ABOVEGROUND STEEL TANKS (AST). THE STEEL TANKS HAS THE CAPACITY OF 20,000 GALS. OF DIESEL FUEL LOCATED AT PMIC PP4 BULK FUEL FACILITY

Interested firms are required to submit proposals to PMIC PP4 Facility Office outlining their ability to draft a Work Plan for the upgrading of the existing AST Tanks. The work plan must include the scope of work, and the schedule of work following all Federal Rules and Regulations applicable to the job (on-site).

Deadline for submission of proposals is on February 7, 2011. Proposed completion of the Work Plan is on February 28, 2011.

For more information, contact:

Richard V. Cano Plant Manager Tel. (670) 322-6187	Carlito J. Marquez Improvement Project Manager Tel. (670) 322-6181
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Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Obama's right balance

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In his State of the Union address Tuesday night, President Obama struck a fair balance between economic recovery and deficit reduction.

With nearly 15 million people out of work, spurring job growth is still the federal government's most urgent priority. In the face of such widespread economic hardship, cuts in government spending should be imposed more gradually than the new House Republican majority wants.

The economy has been recovering slowly and steadily under Obama. But the president is correct in his assessment that the government needs to do more. That includes continued investment in areas such as infrastructure, clean energy, and education.

"At stake is whether new jobs and industries take root in this country, or somewhere else," Obama said. "It's whether we sustain the leadership that has made America not just a place on a map, but a light to the world. We are poised for progress."

Obama also showed he understands that last November's elections, in which the GOP picked up 63 House seats and five in the Senate, was largely a message about government spending. His call for a five-year freeze on nonsecurity discretionary spending, about 14 percent of the overall federal budget, is at least a start.

More will need to be done to reduce the annual deficit of about \$1.4 trillion, and to tackle the national debt of \$14.3 trillion. Hours before the president's speech, 17 House Democrats voted with Republicans to roll back domestic spending to the levels of three years ago. It was a sign that Obama may need to recalibrate even more.

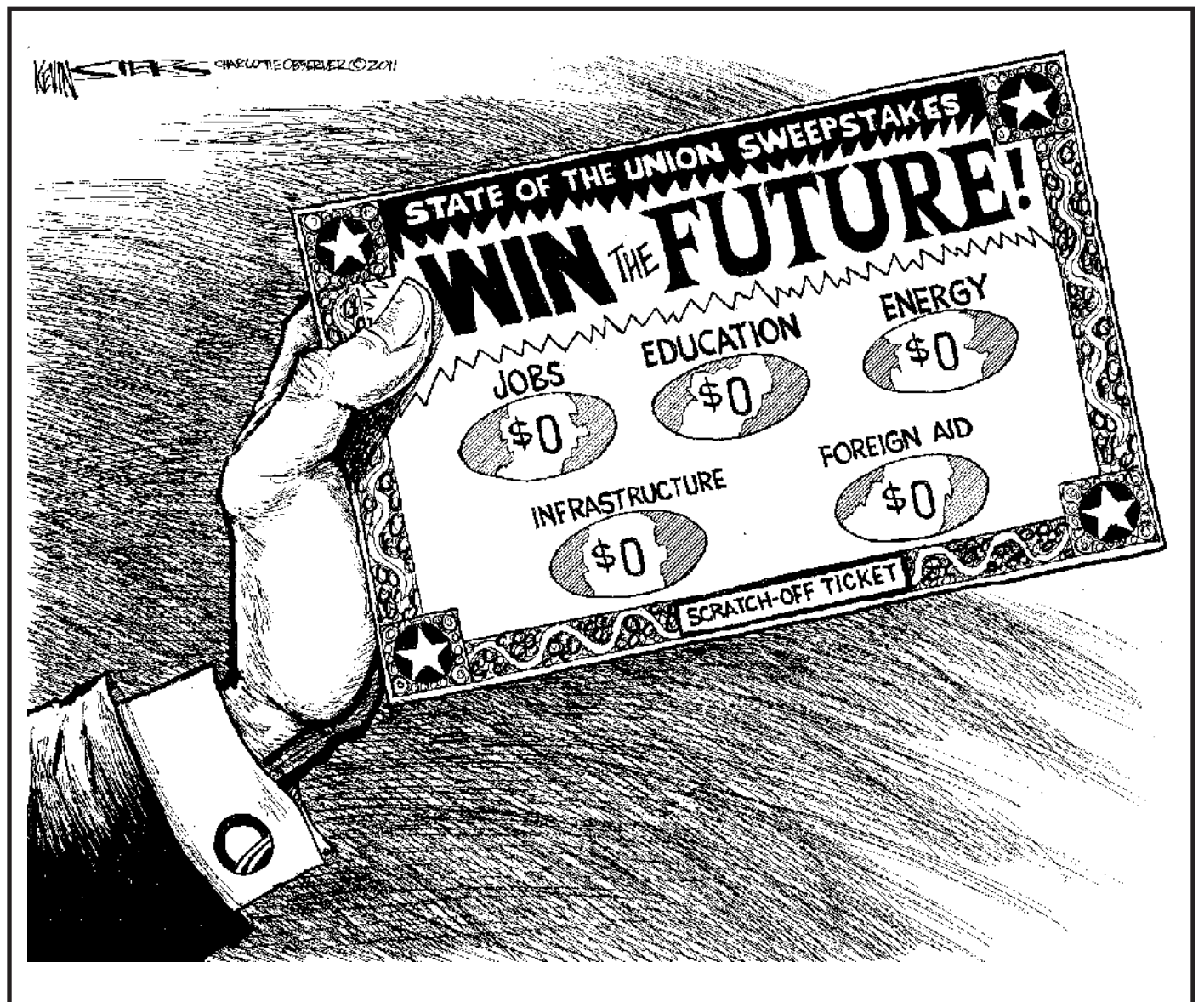
But the government's heavy borrowing didn't occur overnight, or even in just the past two years. The deficits were partly a temporary response to the worst economic crisis of the past half-century. Deficits shouldn't be reduced so rapidly as to cut the safety net for our most vulnerable citizens.

The spending freeze would not affect Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, defense, or interest payments on the national debt. But that doesn't mean other budget savings can't be achieved. For example, Obama has endorsed Defense Secretary Robert Gates' proposal for \$78 billion in cuts to the military over five years.

In the wake of the attempted assassination of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., this year's State of the Union speech included a needed experiment in civility by lawmakers. Instead of dividing the House chamber strictly along partisan lines, some members of each party mingled with the other side. They included Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., who famously shouted "You lie!" at Obama during a speech two years ago.

The first lady's box included several people connected to the shootings in Tucson. Also among the guests was Brandon Ford, a junior at West Philadelphia High School who helped design a fuel-efficient hybrid car for an international competition; and Brandon and Julie Fisher, small-business owners from Berlin, Pa., who manufactured drill bits used to find and rescue the 33 trapped Chilean miners.

Whether renewed civility in Washington will bring about significant bipartisan achievement is doubtful. But Obama has shown in a flurry of recent deals that compromise is possible, and his speech last night offered more opportunities.



Economic prosperity lies within us

Please repeat three times aloud: "A nation is only as strong as its educated and skilled workforce!" Until we fully realize this fact and begin the educating and training of our local population, we will always be dependent on outside investors and on the food stamps so generously given to many of our people by the United States. This is in addition to all the other monetary aid given to build and to operate our basic needs. We have basically become a nation of dependents. Forgive the harsh expression, but please prove me wrong.

There cannot be any growth and security when we the local population has to depend so heavily on outside help for almost everything we need. But how did we arrive at this dismal situation in which everybody else but us has to work for a living? Let's trace how this happened.

Let's stretch our memories back a few years. Who built the Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa, the Sister Remedios School, the former Royal Taga Hotel, Marianas High School, Hopwood Junior High School, Dr. Torres Hospital, all the houses and buildings after the war up to 1983? Who built the roads and all the other facilities we have dating back before 1983? Who did all the electrical, plumbing, carpentry, masonry, painting, and other trades? Who did all the sewing? Who operated the restaurants and other small businesses?

Weren't they your fathers, mothers, grandfathers, grandmothers, uncles, and aunties? Did they complain about the hard work and the minimum wages paid? Were they proud of their endeavors?

Where did we go wrong? When did we begin to back off from manual labor and become wards of the state asking for government jobs and food stamps? Frankly speaking, it was not entirely our fault. Various situations complicated a smooth transition from a dominated populace to a workforce.

A lot of the blame must fall on our local and federal governments. As we will see they caused much of our dislike for work and for the lack of training skills for us. They also robbed us of the opportunities to enter into businesses. Having said that, we must now forget it and amend the wrongs done to us.

I strongly suggest we review Don Farrell's excellent book *History of the Northern Marianas Islands*. The first statement that caught my eye on page 484 was: "Saipan had 1,472 people of employment age and status.... Nearly 75 percent of this potential working population had earned its income in Japanese times from land rentals. Developing new work habits would not be easy." This seems to be a trait even today.

An astonishing fact on page 485 states that in 1946 while there was a military population on Saipan, the farms at As Lito produced

By **ANTHONY PELLEGRINO**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.



200,000 lbs of fruits and vegetables monthly! Tinian also produced about 200,000 lbs of fruit and vegetables monthly! Can we duplicate that if we have a market? There is a market but we must go after it. Markets do not come to us. We must cultivate them.

From observations like this we will see how later negative factors further deterred us from developing a labor force which has reached down to us today. For example, I quote from an article in the *National Review* magazine written in Dec. 31, 2005:

"The reason behind the exemption from U.S. immigration law was the fear that the indigenous population might come to be outnumbered by newcomers, as in Hawaii...."

But rather than using the control over immigration to preserve their "culture and community," the island elite and outside businessmen combined it with other loopholes (tariff-free exports to the U.S. and the right to claim "Made in the USA" locally assembled garments) to upend the intent of the immigration exemption by importing a large foreign workforce...."

You know the rest of the story. We are still wrestling with this problem.

I quote again from the same source:

"This foreign-labor program has completely transformed the CNMI's society in a single generation. Not only did this influx change our cultural system and blend of ethnic groups, but the guest worker system has also reinforced in us locals a culture of pervasive dependence on government. Fully 70 percent of the labor force is non-citizens, and at least 85 percent of all private-sector jobs are held by Asians. U.S. citizens have an unemployment rate triple that of non-citizens; of the indigenous Chamorros who have jobs, 56 percent work for the government, fueling a doubling in the size of the bureaucracy since 1980."

As you recall the local Department of Labor did have a mandatory requirement that in any company 20 percent of all employees had to be local citizens. But what many of us did not realize is that they

See **ECONOMIC** on Page 13

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

E-2 CNMI (E2C) visas: Part I

On Dec. 17, 2011, the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services published final regulations with respect to E2C investment status available to qualified foreign investors in the CNMI. This special CNMI-only status is mandated by the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008. The purpose of the special status, according to USCIS, is to “allow eligible CNMI investors to remain in the CNMI for the duration of the transition period under E2C Investor status, and to exit and enter the CNMI with valid CNMI E-2 visas.”

In this column, we will address (1) how the final regulations differ from the proposed regulations, (2) what the regulations require and how they will affect foreign investors in the CNMI. Next week, we will address how the E2C differs from regular E-2 status, and how and where to apply for E2C status. USCIS has re-designated the E-2 CNMI as “E2C,” and we will use this term from here on.

Proposed Versus Final Regulations

Proposed regulations regarding the E2C were published on Sept. 14, 2009. The public was invited to comment on the proposed regulations. The comment period on the proposed regulations closed on Oct. 14, 2009. After considering the comments, an agency may adopt or reject the suggestions and changes that are urged by the public. In this instance, the outcome of the public comment period was favorable to CNMI investors in two significant aspects: the final rules (1) reduced the amount of minimum investment for long term business entry permit holders from \$150,000 down to \$50,000, and (2) clarified that qualified persons with E2C can obtain E2C status on Saipan. But if they travel outside the CNMI, they must obtain the actual visa from the appropriate U.S. consulate before being allowed to return here. Once you have an E2C status, you cannot use advance parole to return. The good news is that this should not be a complex or difficult task.

Which Investors are Eligible for E2C

Only investors with existing “long-term investor” status in the Commonwealth will be eligible for E2C status under the new regulations. Long-term investors are those who hold one of the following entry permits: (1) Foreign Investor Entry Permit (240G or the old designation, 706G) based on a Certificate of Foreign Investment; (2) Long Term Business Entry permit (240N or 706N); and Retiree Entry Permit (240O or 706O) based on a Foreign Retiree Certificate. The holders of these types of CNMI entry permits, including their spouses and children, will be eligible for the newly created E2C Investor status. Holders of “short term,” “regular term” business permits, and special two-year Japanese retirement entry permits are not eligible to apply for E2C investor status or visas.

Requirements for E2C Investor Visas

A foreign investor must show the following in order to be classified as E2C Investor:

1. That the investor was admitted into the CNMI with one of the qualifying CNMI investor visas listed above, before Nov. 28, 2009;
2. That the investor has continuously maintained residence in the CNMI under long-term investment status;
3. That the investor currently maintains the investment(s) that formed the basis of the CNMI long-term investment status;
4. That the investor is otherwise admissible to the United States under U.S. immigration laws.

Admitted Before Transition Program Effective Date

This provision means that the long-term investor status must have existed prior to Nov. 28, 2009. New applications for CNMI investor status pending on that date do not qualify. Long-term investment status that existed in the past that lapsed or expired and was not renewed does not qualify either.

Several issues have emerged with respect to this requirement: Must the investor have been physically present in the CNMI on Nov. 28? If a holder of a valid long-term investment permit was outside the CNMI on Nov. 28, can he still apply for and qualify as an E2C Investor? Can the investor apply abroad? Can the investor return to the CNMI on parole or visa waiver and then apply? Although these issues were previously unclear, they have now been answered in the affirmative. A foreign investor who meets all of the other qualifications, including continuous residence and maintaining the qualifying investment, is eligible for E2C. He can apply for the status and visa in his home country at the appropriate U.S. consulate or he can enter the CNMI on a visa waiver, B1/B2

visa or parole, and apply to convert his status to E2C.

Maintained Residence in the CNMI

The final regulations, like the proposed regulations before them, require that the investor must have maintained continuous residence in the CNMI from the time of the original grant of status to the present. The regulations and accompanying guidance make it very clear that “continuous residence” is not the same thing “continuous physical presence.” It does however require that the investor have been physically present for at least 50 percent of the time for which continuous residence is required. Continuous residence is lost if the investor stayed out of the CNMI for more than one year, regardless of the reason for the absence. Continuous residence may be lost if the investor stayed out of the CNMI for more than six months. If the investor stayed out of the CNMI for six months or more but for less than one year, he must demonstrate that he did not abandon his residence by offer of proof that will vary case by case.

We are unhappy with the “continuously maintained residence” requirement because it puts a burden on existing investors that did not exist under the CNMI status which is allegedly being “grandfathered” by the E2C provision. Neither the Foreign Investor Entry Permit (240-G), nor the Long Term Business Entry Permit (240-N) nor the Retiree Entry Permit (240-O) required any form of sustained presence in the CNMI. All three were multiple entry visas: 240-N and 240-O were good for two years and renewable, and 240-G was, originally, “perpetual.”

We had understood that the intent of creating the E-2 CNMI Investor status was to “grandfather” or maintain the status of existing CNMI investors for a limited period to minimize economic disruption and to give investors an opportunity to either qualify for U.S. investor status or to reorganize their businesses and relocate. The “continuously maintained residence” requirement seriously limits the number of existing investors who will be able to qualify. We believe that this is likely to have a further detrimental effect on our already badly ailing economy.

We suspect that the requirement was added in response to the large number of applications granted for long-term investor status, made by individuals with no prior connection to the CNMI, in the last several months before Nov. 28, 2009. Many of these people either misunderstood the law, or were defrauded by opportunists, both in the CNMI and abroad.

Whatever the reason for the restriction, there is also an underlying assumption that all long-term investors in the CNMI obtained that status with the intent to reside in the CNMI. This is not necessarily true. Some foreign investors obtained these visas with the intent of living in the CNMI, but not all. We believe that foreign investors in the CNMI fall into roughly three groups:

1. Passive investors, who do not live here, who are not actively involved in running or managing the investment, and only occasionally visit. These will not qualify for E-2 CNMI Investor status.
2. International businesspeople, who have businesses in the CNMI and elsewhere, who divide their time among their various business interests, and may spend several months during any year, off and on, in the CNMI. They may even have a residence here, but do not live here more than 50 percent of the time. These will not qualify for E-2 CNMI Investor status.
3. Foreign investors whose primary residence is in the CNMI, who live and work here and who are actively involved with their businesses. These will meet the “continuously maintained residency” requirement, although given the current state of the CNMI economy they may fail under the “maintained the investment” that formed the basis of the original grant of status.

So what are foreign investors in categories 1 and 2 to do if they wish to visit their businesses or investments in the CNMI? A B1/B2 visa, which is not restricted by country, seems like a logical alternative for those who do not meet the residency requirement. This visa allows multiple entry, for business or pleasure, for periods of up to six months, and the visa is good for up to 10 years, at discretion of the issuing consulate. But there is a rub and it is political. How long a visa you get, how difficult it is to get, how long it takes will depend on your nationality as well as your wealth. We are informed by a Russian resident of Saipan and by Russian correspondents, that Russians are only issued a one-year B1/B2 visa by the U.S. State Department. We have heard nightmare stories of Philippine citizens standing in line for visas for days at the U.S. embassy in Manila, only to be refused. Consulates in China have a reputation of being difficult places for Chinese nationals to obtain visas. We will have to wait and see what effect this additional obstacle to foreign investment

IMMIGRATION FORUM

By **MAYA KARA** and **BRUCE MAILMAN**

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Maya Kara is a native of Hungary and comes to the practice of law by way of her interest in Asian history. Bruce Mailman is a native of Bakersfield, California and was a private investigator in California prior to becoming a lawyer. Both have lived and practiced law in the CNMI for over 20 years, Maya in government service and Bruce in private practice. They are married and are partners in the law firm of Mailman & Kara, LLC in Garapan, Saipan.

will have on our already fragile economy.

Maintained the Investment

This means having a business or an investment that is at least equal in value to the original investment that was required by law when the investor first qualified for the CNMI long-term investor status. Qualifying investment levels have waxed and waned according to changing public laws and we will not reiterate them here. Suffice it to say that over the years required investments fluctuated between as little as \$50,000 for a two-year investor permit to as much as \$2,000,000 in aggregate for a Foreign Investment Certificate. The final rules make clear that the minimum original qualifying investments for purposes of E2C were:

1. \$50,000 for holders of Long Term Business Entry permit (240-N); and
2. \$100,000 in an aggregate approved investment in excess of \$2,000,000 or at least \$250,000 in a single approved investment for holders of Foreign Investor Entry Permit (240-G) based on a Certificate of Foreign Investment.
3. Retiree investors, over the age of 55, who were issued Foreign Retiree Investment Certificate based upon a qualifying investment in an approved residence in the CNMI are deemed to have met the amount for a qualifying investment.

It is unclear from the rules and accompanying guidance whether the investment must still be worth the original qualifying amount. There are many potential problems in this area if government requires that the investor have maintained the value of the original investment. What is the present value of \$250,000 invested in an apartment house fifteen years ago? By the time you factor in amortization, deterioration due to use and climate, the general decline in the value of real estate, the loss of value of a long-term lease due to the passage of time, it is unlikely that the value of the investment has held. On the other hand, a resort hotel, well maintained and well managed, is likely to have maintained or even increased in value. Active businesses, selling goods or services, may fare better. We hope that USCIS will provide clear guidance in this area.

Otherwise Admissible into the United States

A person may be declared inadmissible to the U.S. based on a wide variety of grounds. The most common involve prior conviction (or just commission) of serious crimes, or minor crimes involving drugs or “moral turpitude,” violations of U.S. immigration law, violations of human rights, membership in proscribed political groups, past or future intended immoral behavior and certain physical and health conditions – just to name a few. Waivers are available for some, but not all, grounds of inadmissibility, but the process of obtaining a waiver is technical and complicated, and success is not guaranteed. This basis of qualification is common to all U.S. visas.






Next week, we will address how and where to apply for E2C status and also how E2C differs from regular E-2 status. If you have questions regarding E2C, please send them to us by email in the coming week and we will attempt to answer them in our next column.

The information contained in this column is intended as general information only, and not as individual legal advice. Readers should obtain professional legal advice before taking action with respect to their individual situations. Readers may submit questions regarding federalization or immigration issues to the authors by email to lexmarianas@pticom.com. Readers may also e-mail written questions through the Saipan Tribune at editor@saipantribune.com.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼77°	▲84° ▼77°	▲85° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲85 ▼78
Palau	Rain	▲85 ▼77
Yap	Rain	▲85 ▼76
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲83 ▼77
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲83 ▼77
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲87 ▼78
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲84 ▼76

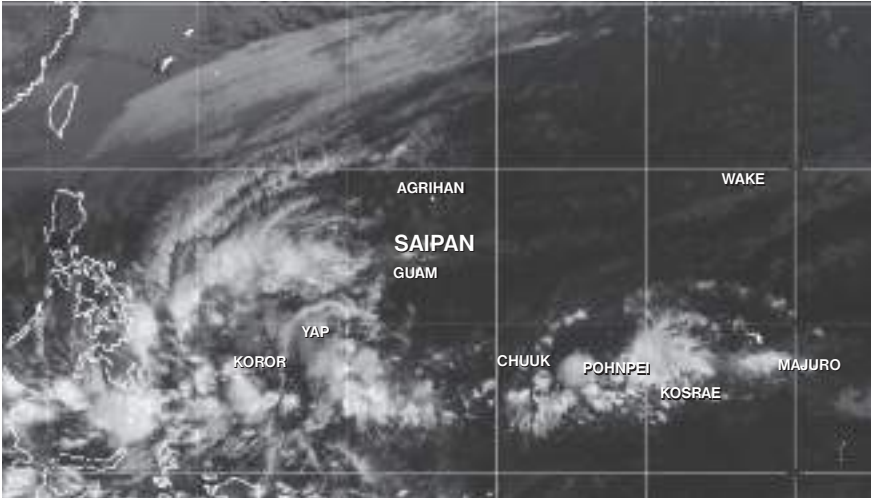
Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲74 ▼67
Beijing	Sunny	▲43 ▼21
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲63 ▼47
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲79 ▼67
London	Sunny	▲42 ▼34
Los Angeles	Showers	▲68 ▼44
Manila	Thundershowers	▲82 ▼71
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲76 ▼62
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲76 ▼61
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲29 ▼22
Osaka	Sunny	▲47 ▼32
Paris	Sunny	▲37 ▼26
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲46 ▼29
Rome	Sunny	▲53 ▼37
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲51 ▼39
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲60 ▼45
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲35 ▼20
Tokyo	Sunny	▲48 ▼32
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲39 ▼29

Tides

Saipan Harbor				
7:16 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet	
12:12 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet	
5:00 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet	

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SUNDAY, JANUARY 30, 2011

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N138E to 23N135E then continues as a stationary front to beyond 130E at 21N. Extensive cloudiness and rain are found northwest of the front. This is just north and west of Iwo Jima. A dissipating cold front extends southwestward from 23N180 to 22N176E then continues as a shear line passing near Guam at 13N145E to end northwest of Koror at 10N130E. Clouds and patchy rain are seen along and up to 260 miles northwest of the boundary east of 141E including the Marianas. Numerous showers and scattered thunderstorms are present along and up to 200 miles northwest of the remainder of the shear line northwest of Koror and Yap. A near-equatorial trough extends eastward from south of Mindanao through 2N130E to a low-level circulation centered south of Koror at 3N137E then turns southeastward to end at EQ143E. Scattered showers and thunderstorms are occurring north of the trough within an area bounded by a line from 1N134E to 4N151E to 11N138E to 9N130E back to 1N134E including Yap and Koror. A trade-wind disturbance is generating scattered showers and thunderstorms between Kosrae and Pohnpei and from north of Kosrae to Kwajalein to near Majuro or within 80 miles of a line from 5N159E to 8N164E to 8N171E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46 AM	6:14 PM
Tuesday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Thursday	6:46 AM	6:16 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:16 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	4:16 AM	3:46 PM
Tuesday	5:05 AM	4:40 PM
Wednesday	5:51 AM	5:33 PM
Thursday	6:32 AM	6:23 PM
Friday	7:11 AM	7:11 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
 - Fax: (670) 235-3740
 - Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
 - Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 16, 2010

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM				GUAM-SAIPAN			
C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily	C09316	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
C09313	7:55am	8:45am	3, 6	C09596	6:35am	7:25am	3, 6
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C09596	7:00am	7:50am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C09601	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7	C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C09603	3:05pm	3:55pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C09602	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily	C09604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
C09599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily	C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL287	6:10am	8:45am	Daily	DL298	10:25am	3:05pm	Daily
DL285	6:40am	9:15am	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	DL286	7:45pm	12:20am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
DL297	4:35pm	7:15pm	Daily	DL288	8:00pm	12:30am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)				OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN			
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily	OZ120	9:50am	2:20am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7	OZ607	9:10pm	2:20am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1	OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ604	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7	OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via KIX	OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6	FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)				BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
CA988	3:15am	6:55am	1, 5 Dec 13, 17, 20, 24 & 27 only	CA987	6:40pm	1:55am+1	4, 7 Dec 12, 16, 19, 23 & 26 only
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ716/603	12:30am	2:20pm	4, 6 via ICN
C09317/891	4:25am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM	DL172/286	8:05am	12:20am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
DL285/173	6:40am	10:15pm	1, 3, 4, 5, 6 via NRT	C0890/9606	10:55am	8:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
C09313/933	7:55am	9:25pm	3 via GUM	OZ702/605	1:10pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
C09313/893	7:55am	11:00pm	3 via GUM-Palau	OZ702/605	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C09603/933	3:05pm	9:25pm	5 via GUM	PR110/C09596	10:15pm	7:25am+1	6 via GUM
C09603/893	3:05pm	11:00pm	5 via GUM-Palau	PR110/C09596	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 4, 7 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 ICN	C0892/9596	10:25pm	7:25am+1	3 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7	C0892/9596	10:25pm	7:50am+1	5 via GUM-Palau
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	1, 2, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 7 via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:30pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM	C0934/9596	11:25pm	7:50am+1	4 via GUM
				C0934/9596	11:59pm	7:25am+1	3 via GUM
				C0934/9596	11:59pm	7:50am+1	5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG				HONG KONG-SAIPAN			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN	OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
C09603/909	3:05pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM	OZ722/605	1:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:35pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ722/605	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN	C0910/9596	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; CA: Air China
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40	11:50	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
FRE 300	17:50	18:20	Daily				
Saipan-Rota				Tinian-Saipan			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
				FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Kilili and the Hilitais Wavin' flag

The not so timid and hardly shy Hilitais of Hopwood welcomed Congressman Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan and guests in his island swearing-in ceremony Friday, graced by the SSSH Manta Ray Band with Will Dewitt, Charlotte Camacho's GTC 3rd graders, and the creme de la creme of island dignitaries past and present.

This groundbreaking affair bore the earmarks of tradition. The march of colors provided bookends, the honor guards in crisp uniform and measured cadence, smart salutes, and muffled commands. Need to teach 'em cadets to bark out commands with confidence so the audience has auditory participation.

Kilili sang the anthems along with uke-strumming Felix Rebauliman. We did, too. My SVES class understood that the anthems are meant to mingle communal voices, not a solo part in the Super Bowl. The music of both anthems evolved from bar tunes. NMC students in my housing complex are anything but sedate when they raise their cups. Solemnity is for quietude of the soul; anthem singing is belting belches from the last meal, loud and clear!

Though official events are deemed religion-neutral, no one objected to retired Bishop Thomas Camacho's invocation. The Camacho connection itself merited the invite; the weight of his ecclesiastical office is a plus. Pastor Ray Kinsella's evangelical eloquence added ecumenical flavor to the closing prayer and benediction.

The most sensitive and delicate part of public ritual is recognizing presence. Kilili returned to the mike to recognize the presence of FSM President Marty Mori who somehow was missed in the salutations. Emcee Jonas Barcinas stretched his recognition skills not to miss anyone, a tricky endeavor especially when in a tux pleated shirt under tropical heat, and missing someone a most assured happening. This is critical in structures of defined pecking order, but in a democracy, the astute simply casts out universal and general salutations. In the CNMI, the notion of "respect" requires Confucian honoring ("bless me, elder") in a bowing gesture, a function of the ritual of recognition.

The accord of respect is paramount in social networking. In a

gathering of this nature, it is best to leave age and titles at the gate unless one is a designated honoree. Interpersonal relationships in many agencies now operate on the horizontal plain where focus on the accountability on function take precedence over the prerogatives and status of role, though this may take a while for this notion to take hold in the CNMI.

Kilili audibly quivered at the onset of his speech, overwhelmed by the honor inherent to the office that was judicially sanctified by U.S. District Court of the NMI Magistrate Judge JVE Manibusan, Jr. Overwhelmed but not drowned by the awesomeness of the occasion, Kilili zeroed in on education and the Hilitais. His political spiel was in the best of political practice, turning his office's image as the CNMI's Capitol Hill moneybag into an RFK-esque query: some ask why, and I ask, why not? "If we can afford a jail for 200 people, why not a new campus for 600 students?"

Turning elder brother, he plowed into "bullying." We took the allusion to extend beyond the schoolyard. We noticed a smile in the normally deceptive dour mustached grimace of anti-domestic violence stalwart Judge Kenneth Govendo. The smile might also be from his marked 66th year of raw oxygen inhalation in the planet Friday. Violence does take place even among close relations, practiced by political hotheads (e.g. v. Gabrielle Giffords of Tucson), and in business race to #1, often in the guise of competition.

Two things happened that jarred consciousness into reality. First were pole-attached red, white and blue balloons that kept popping in the wind. That reminded all that reality pricks illusions of adequacy and bursts delusions of grandeur. Perhaps, we might rethink the function and role of the ceremonial march of colors in our rites so that patriotic pride is not solely consigned to the military defense of the borders; and invoking profundity not be tied to a particular form of religious view of awe and mystery, credo and covenant in two-storeyed pre-Copernican cosmology and medieval feudal sov-

By **JAIME VERGARA**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune's Opinion Section.



oreign metaphors.

We were pleased to note the statesmanship shown by Uncles Ben & Eloy, the members of the Legislature, and everyone else in the audience who deferred to Kilili and his office as the focus of the day.

Second, the Hilitais picked up on K'naan's rap: When I get older, I will be stronger. They'll call me freedom, just like a Wavin' Flag. FIFA cup sponsor Coca-cola, who had Michael Jackson teach the world to sing, popularized the Somali-Canadian artist in 2010 South Africa, resulting in a United Nation's circuit. The Hilitais might even go beyond "Why not a federally-funded new Junior High campus?" to the earlier JFK-esque query, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your Hopwood."

Of course, Kilili might think twice before heading that direction lest he be asked if his Dad is Kenyan, Mom Kansan, and claims to being Hawaiian or Pacifican dubious! I saw Ed Propst lurking at the edge during the ceremony and I am sure he will hilitai (monitor) the Congressman's talk and walk, and other politicos, to make sure they jibe.

Thank you, Hilitais. From the campus, I left determined to walk my talk, and talk my walk, in the light of full freedom, just like a Wavin' Flag. My hope is that everyone else do the same!

ECONOMIC

From Page 10

were mainly "ghost employees." In other words they were token employees without any responsibilities. The only time they visited their employer was on payday to get their pay. And of course none ever learned a trade or work skills.

Another report I read explained that unless we reduce our dependency upon foreign workers, the dollars earned from tourism will never do much to help our economy. This is because the revenues multiplier is about \$.087, which means that for each \$1.00 of visitor spending we have a major leakage of that dollar. This leakage comes from repatriated profits by the investor and foreign labor wages and from excessive importing of most of our commodities. In other words for each \$1.00 in visitor spending, 52.2 cents leaks out of the economy, and 47.8 cents of net export earnings remains in the economy. One way to reduce this leakage is to employ more local labor and create other domestic resources.

One of the most interesting facts I learned from my research was that in 1983 the minimum wage was higher than in 1984. In other words, as more and more nonresident workers flooded the CNMI, the wages went down. Now they are slowly rising against great opposition. Whee! We are now at a whopping \$5.05 per hour. Even if this wage level is more than what a food stamp recipient receives, the potential employee still refuses to work. This is the problem we are faced with. And unless we can motivate our local citizens to become workers again as their parents and grandfathers were years ago, we face a serious dilemma.

In the October 2010 *Time Magazine*, the feature story is that the new and real challenge from China is that China is now investing in its people. More people are learning skills and becoming educated. Think what this will do to the world labor force. From my observations of our economy both local and the U.S., it appears that we have made a fundamental choice to favor consumption over investment in manufacturing and in educating our people to be skilled and trained labors.

We have become spoiled in that we want to consume but not to produce. A good example is to consider the tremendous amount of imported goods versus what we produce ourselves. We prefer to let others do those activities we once did. As a result we whine that our economy is depressed. Is it any wonder?

Let me leave you with this thought: In the U.S., a high school-educated worker is 1.8 times as productive, and a college graduate three times as productive, as someone with a ninth grade education. What can we do with such a low rate of educated and skilled workers?

Remember that the transition period from nonresident workers to local workers started on Nov. 28, 2009, and ends on Dec. 31, 2014. This is the date when all nonresident workers must be reduced to zero! Are we seriously preparing for this date? "A nation is only as strong as its educated and trained workforce!"

Letters to the Editor

Lazy doesn't discriminate

I think it is high time we as a community stop with the "us" versus "them" mentality when it comes to hiring practices in the CNMI. Whether you're a Chamorro, Carolinian, Filipino, Korean, Micronesian, Bangladeshi, Chinese, or even Martian, you should be hired based on your qualifications, experience, and attitude. Nobody should be prioritized for a job simply because of their bloodline. Or familial relations. This sense of entitlement needs to stop.

With this being said, we also must stop stereotyping and considering locals as being gagu, or lazy. Lazy does not discriminate. A lazy person is a lazy person, regardless of where they come from.

If there is anything that signifies laziness, it is panhandling at the corner of the Microl intersection. Last Friday, a group of kids were perched on a very narrow island across Microl, begging for coins to help fund their trip to Tinian. The first thing that comes to my mind is, what parent would allow their small children to be on a narrow island next to cars and buses zooming by at 40 miles an hour? Isn't this DANGEROUS? What if one of these kids slips and gets killed by a car? Who is at fault? Will the parents of the child blame the driver of the car? Why must we endanger the lives of children to make a few measly bucks? Is the life of a child really worth it?

Enhancing tourist experience

For an entity that claims its main business is tourism, the CNMI sure isn't doing very much about it. It has established the Marianas Visitors Authority. But according to a statement in this paper last week by MVA's managing director, MVA's "primary function is promotional." Which has been translated by all and sundry to mean "bringing tourists to the CNMI."

Once those tourists get here, though, MVA has no responsibility. There is nothing in the law, there is nothing in MVA's program, there is no evidence anywhere that anyone has any responsibility toward the tourist once the s/he has arrived in the CNMI. The managing director did acknowledge that "it is also important to maintain tourist sites," but that's as far as it goes, and maintenance seems to mean mowing the grass rather than re-painting and repairing buildings and monuments.

With tourism as the main industry on which the economy depends, one would expect the government would want to work closely with the private sector to make sure that everything that can possibly be done to enhance the tourist experience is, in fact, done.

Rather, it's been left to the private sector to cater to those tourists that do arrive here. As though the government has no interest in finding more things for them to do, see, experience; no concern for

If you want to go to Tinian for the annual Pika Festival, then please, WORK FOR IT! Hold bake sales, car washes, luncheons, and take a lawn mower around the neighborhood and see if you can cut someone's grass. Get sponsors and pick up trash along our beaches. I will not donate to panhandlers, but I certainly would be happy to support them if they were willing to work for their money. And what if the kids work hard and don't end up with enough money to go to Tinian? Well, it's tough, but it is a great lesson in life. Perhaps the money can be saved for next year's trip. Or perhaps the group will work harder in the future or come up with better fundraising ideas. In life, we don't always get what we want, and the sooner kids realize this, the better off they are.

These are hard times. Yes, we all know this firsthand. But it is up to us to teach our children that they must work hard if they want something. And as Christians, we need to instill in them the notion that God only helps those who help themselves.

We as a community have an important decision to make. Do we turn the CNMI in to an island of beggars or do we turn it in to an island of productive, hardworking community members? The choice is ours. Let's do the right thing by restoring pride in the workplace. We need to remember that any job is a good job if it is an honest job. It does not matter if you drive a honey wagon or wait tables or build roads and houses, you are providing a GREAT SERVICE to the CNMI, and for that, we as a community are indebted to you.

Ed Propst

Via email

the tourist dollar that isn't getting spent here, no desire to provide to the tourist an understanding of local culture and tradition.

Develop new attractions? Help them get around the island? Add to present tourist sites? Build things for them to do in rainy weather? Provide brochures about the monuments at Banzai Cliff? Provide hiking trails from Lake Susupe to Marpi? Establish a cultural center? Promote eco-tourism?

There is no one in government assigned the responsibility for soliciting ideas, for designing and seeking funding for more tourism activities, for repainting and repairing crumbling monuments, for promoting broader local involvement, for improving tourist enjoyment of the islands' scenic views, beaches, walkways.

Instead, according to the *Tribune*, the governor is slated to sign HB 17-141, which would fritter away \$6.2 million in bribes to travel agents in the amount of \$100 for each tourist they bring to the CNMI. What happens to that tourist once s/he gets here, no one seems to care. Nor does anyone seem to care about how else that \$6.2 million might have been used to enhance the tourist experience...

Tuth Tighe

Tanapag

Business

An uncertain future after jobless benefits expire

LAS VEGAS (AP)—The portraits of his dead father are among the few mementoes Bud Meyers is certain he will take with him when he is forced from his home of five years next month because he cannot pay the rent.

His prized collection of mystery novels, the bedroom set he was once proud to purchase new and anything else that can't fit into the trunk of a car must be left behind.

More than two years after Meyers lost his job as a Las Vegas Strip bartender and nearly eight months after he exhausted his unemployment benefits, it has come to this: a careful inventory of a life's possessions and the hopeless embrace of a future as a middle-aged homeless man.

"I can't believe this is happening to my life," Meyers, 55, said on a recent afternoon, as he surveyed the one-bedroom apartment he must soon abandon. "It's a social holocaust."

Meyers, who is single and childless, is among a growing number of men and women who no longer qualify for unemployment benefits because they have been out of work for so long.

"Exhaustees" or "99ers"—as they are sometimes called—are searching for work and help across the United States. But their situation seems particularly bleak in Nevada, where unemployment, bankruptcies and foreclosure rates are the highest in the nation and job creation is at a crawl. The "99er" moniker refers to those who've gone beyond the maximum weeks



Unemployed bartender Bud Meyers sits at his computer where he spends most of his time blogging, Friday, Jan. 21, 2011 in Las Vegas. AP

of benefits available, but many people don't qualify for the full 99-week period.

More than 30,000 Nevadans have exhausted their benefits and hundreds more are expected to join those ranks this year, with the state's average length of unemployment climbing to more than eight months in December, according to state data.

The response from Washington has been muted. A law passed last month that restored the federal emergency unem-

ployment program through the end of 2011 did not account for exhaustees.

Meanwhile, efforts to extend benefits for 20 more weeks in states with unemployment rates of 10 percent or higher have mostly met silence.

"People that are unemployed, particularly in hard-hit states like Nevada, they are not spoiled," said Rep. Shelley Berkley, a Las Vegas Democrat who introduced a measure to extend benefits. "They are

not lazy. They are not hobos. It is just the economy is so bad that there aren't enough jobs out there."

The Silver State's unemployment rate grew to 14.5 percent in December. In the Las Vegas area, where most Nevadans live, it soared to 14.9 percent. In Reno, the rate climbed to 13.8 percent from 13.3 the month before. Nationally, the unemployment rate was 9.4 percent in December, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Transportation, warehousing and utility industries continued to shed jobs in Nevada. Gambling revenue, the lifeblood of Las Vegas, fell by 4.7 percent in November.

At best, Nevada's economy shows uneven signs of growth, said Stephen Brown, director of the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

"People have stopped looking for work," he said. "They don't

think they will find" a job.

Caught with no income and a recurring flood of unpaid bills, the chronically unemployed are overwhelming charitable groups.

At the Foundation for an Independent Tomorrow, a Las Vegas work placement center, the number of people asking for help has doubled to 1,000 this year since 2007. Staff members can only do so much for those who have been unemployed for years, said Development Coordinator Rachel Santos.

"These are some of the hardest to employ," she said. "We can't create jobs. We can't do anything magical."

The Goodwill of Southern Nevada said more than 5,600 people asked for career guidance in 2010, up 30 percent from the year before. Roughly 25 percent of those people no longer qualified for unemployment benefits, said CEO Steve Chartrand.

"One of the things we offer is hope," he said. "Many people come in really feeling down and out and our staff will take the time to listen to them."

But for some 99ers, the time for hope has passed.

Meyers initially welcomed his termination in October 2008 as a vacation from the daily grind of catering to tip-hungry cocktail waitresses and standing behind a crowded bar. He raided his \$30,000 rainy-day fund and cut back on luxuries such as new clothes and hair cuts.

Public optimism but little progress on Doha deal

DAVOS, Switzerland (AP)—Key global trade officials spoke of their optimism that a new deal to liberalize international commerce can be finalized, but offered little in the way of concrete progress Saturday to indicate they can reach agreement before the end of the year.

Meanwhile, about 60 protesters marched down the street behind the Congress Center where the World Economic Forum's annual meeting was winding

down and the event was peaceful until a brief skirmish near a train station about a kilometer away from the venue.

Police fired rubber bullets and a fire hose at the protests, some of whom were carrying a banner that read "Tunisia equals Cairo equals Davos."

It was a nod to the claims by critics that the five-day meetings serves as nothing more than a fancy get-together for the world's business and political elite with-

out regard to common citizens.

But inside, concern over the protests in Egypt was palpable, with many calling on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to ensure protesters were guaranteed freedom of expression and speech.

"I think that we have to see how things move today and, obviously, the key here is for President Mubarak to respond to the needs of his people in a way that is more directly connected

to their frustrations, much more so than apparently yesterday's speech succeeded in doing," Sen. John Kerry, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee told The Associated Press on the sidelines of the Forum's annual meeting.

Kerry's comments came just minutes after Egyptian state television reported that the Cabinet of Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif had resigned on Mubarak's orders.

Comcast takes control of NBC Universal

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The nation's largest cable TV company, Comcast Corp., took control of NBC Universal after the government shackled its behavior in the coming years to protect online video services such as Netflix and Hulu.

The deal closed shortly before midnight EST on Friday.

The takeover gave the cable-hookup company 51 percent control of NBC Universal, which owns the nation's fourth-ranked broadcaster,

NBC; the Universal Pictures movie studio and related theme parks; and a bevy of cable channels including Bravo, E! and USA.

The combination had raised fears that Comcast might abuse its control of NBC Universal to favor its most valuable customers: the 23 million who rely on it for cable TV service and the 17 million who pay for Internet connections.

But the Justice Department and Federal Communications

Commission imposed conditions that prevent Comcast from keeping to itself NBC Universal's popular shows such as "The Office" and movies including "Despicable Me" for the next several years.

NBC's "30 Rock" on Thursday night spoofed Comcast's impending takeover from General Electric Co. As a clock bell sounded, a neon "GE" atop an office building fizzled out and was replaced by a "K" inside a

swoosh resembling Comcast's logo.

"Wow, out with GE, in with Kabletown," said Tina Fey's character, Liz Lemon. "Seems like one of us should sing 'The Circle Game' right now."

Conditions imposed on Comcast were serious, though.

Regulators forced Comcast to make the full suite of NBC Universal content available as a single package to online competitors on terms comparable to those reached with more established rivals such as Dish Network Corp. and DirecTV.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Tunisia bank chief: Country is open for business

DAVOS, Switzerland (AP)—The governor of Tunisia's central bank says the country is back in business and welcoming back investors. Mustapha Kamel Nabli, appointed governor of the country's central bank earlier this week, said Saturday at the World Economic Forum that the mere fact he was in Davos was an indication that "things are under control economically." He pledged that corruption and cronyism in the North African nation would be replaced by transparency.

Reports: Chilean court suspends LAN-TAM merger

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP)—Officials have suspended a merger between Chile's LAN Airlines and Brazil's TAM Airlines while they investigate whether it complies with the South American country's anti-trust laws, Brazilian news media reported Saturday. The five-member Court for the Defense

of Free Competition issued the decision Friday in response to a request from the private National Consumer Corporation, the daily Tercera newspaper reported. No one answered the telephone Saturday at the court or at LAN's offices. Corporation president Hernan Calderon told radio Cooperativa on Saturday that "we value the court's ruling."

Calif. cilantro recalled over salmonella fears

SALINAS, Calif. (AP)—A Central California company is recalling four brands of fresh cilantro because they may be contaminated with salmonella. Sabor Farms in Salinas announced the recall Friday. The recalled cilantro was sold between Jan. 14 and Jan. 28 under the labels Nature's Reward, Ocean Mist, Tanimura & Antle and Queen Victoria. Sabor Farms says the products were on store shelves in California and several other states. The company says the contamination was detected in a routine surveillance sample at its Salinas facility. No illnesses have been reported.

Nation

Divers find no bodies in Central California canal

PATTERSON, Calif. (AP)—Divers on Saturday ended their search in a canal without finding the bodies of a missing 4-year-old boy and his accused kidnapper near the underwater site where the suspect's car was found.

A dive team searched an

underwater tunnel for Juliani Cardenas and 27-year-old Jose Esteban Rodriguez without success. Sonars also failed to turn up any sign of bodies.

Rodriguez is suspected of kidnapping Juliani Cardenas, his ex-girlfriend's son, from the

boy's grandmother in Patterson on Jan. 18.

The crews "are satisfied that the siphon is clear," Stanislaus County Sheriff's Deputy Royjindar Singh said, referring to the long underwater tunnel connecting two sections of the

Delta-Mendota Canal in Central California. "There's no bodies in there."

Rodriguez's damaged 2003 silver Toyota Corolla was recovered Friday evening from the canal outside Patterson, but the pair were not inside.

Authorities will now conduct air and ground searches of the more than 100-mile canal, Singh said.

"It's been very frustrating," Singh said. "But we're going to keep searching until we bring that little boy home."

Divers have been combing the canal for more than a week since a farmworker told Sheriff's officials he saw a car matching Rodriguez's go into the water with a man and a boy inside.

"As always, I've been cautiously hopeful that I would bring little Juliani home alive," Stanislaus County Sheriff Adam Christianson said. "But there is absolutely no information or evidence or anything else that tells us this car went into the canal and then (Rodriguez) fled the scene."

Authorities have searched the canal since, pulling up the Toyota and 16 other mostly stolen vehicles. That included Saturday's recovery of a 2005 Ford Taurus reported stolen from San Francisco in 2007, Singh said.

Juliani's mother, Tabitha Cardenas, who has publicly pleaded for her son's safe return, is eight months pregnant with Rodriguez's unborn daughter.

She ended her nearly three-year relationship with him several months ago.

On Friday, Cardenas tearfully said on HLN's Nancy Grace that she believes Rodriguez dumped his car in the canal and had help doing it.

"I'm thinking who would do that? I'm thinking it must've been a family member," Cardenas said. "If just you're somebody's friend, why would you go to such great lengths to help him?"

While authorities have feared the worst, the owner of the dive team service contracted by authorities to conduct the underwater search Friday and Saturday said he believed that if the bodies were in the canal, they would have turned up by now.

Obama calls for restraint, reform in Egypt

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama issued a plea for restraint in Egypt after meeting

with national security aides Saturday to assess the Cairo government's response to widespread protests threatening the stability of the country.

A White House statement said Obama "reiterated our focus on opposing violence and calling for restraint, supporting universal rights, and supporting concrete steps that advance political reform within Egypt."



Obama

But Obama offered no reaction to President Hosni Mubarak's decision earlier Saturday to name a vice president for the first time since coming to power nearly 30 years ago. Mubarak appointed his intelligence chief, Omar Suleiman, who's well respected by American officials. The president also fired his Cabinet.

Five days of protests have left at more than 70 dead.

Before Suleiman's appointment, State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said the U.S. wanted to see Mubarak fulfill his pledges of reform as protests swept the country.

"The Egyptian government can't reshuffle the deck and

then stand pat," Crowley said on his Twitter account. "President Mubarak's words pledging reform must be followed by action."

Crowley said Egyptians "no longer accept the status quo. They are looking to their government for a meaningful process to foster real reform."

After speaking to Mubarak by telephone late Friday, Obama delivered a four minute statement calling on the Egyptian leader to take steps to democratize his government and refrain from using

violence against his people. As events unfolded Saturday, Obama and his advisers kept a low profile.

The president spent part of the morning watching one of his daughter's basketball games at a community center in the Maryland suburbs.

At the White House, top diplomatic, security and intelligence officials gathered for two hours for review the situation in Egypt. The meeting was led by national security adviser Tom Donilon and included White House chief of staff William Daley and CIA Director Leon Panetta. Vice President Joe Biden, Secretary of State

Hillary Rodham Clinton and Margaret Scobey, the U.S. ambassador to Egypt, participated by teleconference, the White House said.

Obama did not attend that session.

His afternoon meeting with many of the same officials also included press secretary Robert Gibbs and adviser David Plouffe.

Suleiman has played an active role in the peace process, particularly in trying to arrange compromise between rival Palestinian factions, Fatah and Hamas. He has been at the forefront of the Egyptian effort to crackdown on arms smuggling from Egypt into Gaza.

Suleiman has been "the point person on both the U.S. relationship and the Israel Egyptian relationship," said Jon Alterman, Mideast director at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "He's very reassuring both ways."

Diplomatic cables released by Wikileaks help illustrate that point. One reports on an April 2009 meeting between Suleiman and Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Suleiman, the cable says, "explained that his overarching regional goal was combating radicalism, especially in Gaza, Iran, and Sudan."



AP

Rescue workers pull up three cars from a canal in Patterson, Calif., Friday, Jan. 28, 2011.

Chaplains try a new path to deal with PTSD

DENVER (AP)—A Colorado theology school is teaching Air Force chaplains to consider the religious beliefs of servicemen and women to better help them cope with post-traumatic stress.

The goal is to build trust so a chaplain can encourage service members to draw on their individual concepts of God and spirituality, said Carrie Doehring, an associate professor of pastoral care at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver.

Doehring helped develop the one-year program for the Air Force, which wanted another way for its chaplains to respond to the stress of deployments amid two protracted wars.

Doehring said she believes it's the only program of its kind in the country.

One student graduated last year and four are enrolled this year.

"This is incredibly helpful when dealing with trauma survivors," the graduate, Air Force Chaplain Dallas Little, said in

an e-mail to The Associated Press. Little, a captain, is deployed in southwest Asia but said he couldn't disclose where for security reasons.

Little said he starts by trying to understand a service member's religious views. Trust and acceptance come more quickly, he said, and that person is more likely to relate the traumatic experience to Little so he can help.

Little said he's used the approach in a veterans hospital, an Air Force hospital, a base chapel and on deployment, and it has worked well in each setting.

He also said it also discourages him from "premature judgment, hasty moralizing or proselytizing."

Chaplain Matt Boarts, one of the students currently in the program, said he's learning to help others find the right words to express their traumatic experiences or to phrase the questions they may have.

"They come back having seen things they don't know how to

share," said Boarts, an Air Force major. "They become isolated. They don't know how to ask it or they think the words in their head might be offensive."

If people want to ask for his spiritual advice about their experience, he will give it, said Boarts, a Lutheran, but refraining from proselytizing isn't a dilemma for him, he said.

The issue of proselytizing is a delicate one, Doehring said.

"If they were leading worship where people have come to a Christian service of worship, of course they would lead out of their own tradition," she said of the chaplains. "Or if they're leading a prayer before troops go on a mission and the troops have volunteered to come to that prayer, they would use their own traditions."

But when people go to a chaplain for help with post-traumatic stress or other issues, they want someone who respects their views and won't try to impose other beliefs on them, she said.

ACROSS THE NATION

Mother, 2 kids, boyfriend dead in ND shootings

MINOT, N.D. (AP)—The victims of a quadruple slaying in North Dakota were a mother, two of her children and her boyfriend, and all four suffered gunshot wounds, police said Saturday. No arrests have been made in the two Friday shootings in Minot, but authorities said they've questioned a "person of interest" and insist residents aren't in danger. North Dakota averages only 11 homicides a year. Sabrina Zephier, 19, was found dead after police received a call about "a woman down and bloody" at an apartment Friday afternoon, police said in a statement Saturday. Less than an hour later, a similar call came in about a boy lying on the floor bleeding from the mouth in a trailer southeast of town. Police responded and found three more victims: Zephier's mother, Jolene Zephier, 38; her brother, Dylan Zephier, 13; and Jolene Zephier's boyfriend, Jeremy Longie, 22, said Minot Police Capt. Dan Strandberg.

Parolee arrested in congresswoman threats case

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A parolee was arrested Friday in connection with a series of recent phone calls threatening to kill retired U.S. Con-

gresswoman Diane Watson, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department said. Sheron Nelson, 42, was taken into custody at the South Los Angeles office of his state parole agent. He was booked on suspicion of making felony terrorist threats and identity theft, the sheriff's department said. A search of Nelson's residence revealed no weapons, but numerous stolen electronics items were recovered, the sheriff's department said.

Mom charged in kids' slayings treated at hospital

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—The woman who authorities say killed her teenage daughter and son because she was fed up with them talking back and being mouthy did not appear in court Saturday because she was being treated at a hospital for an unknown condition. Authorities say Julie Powers Schenecker was taken to Tampa General Hospital shortly after midnight Saturday to be treated for a medical condition that existed before she was taken to jail. Hillsborough Sheriff's deputies—who oversee jail inmates—said they could not reveal Schenecker's medical condition, citing health care privacy laws. A jail spokesman said late Saturday that Schenecker was still at the hospital and that her first court appearance was pending.

Asia

5 Somalis brought to SKorea to be tried for piracy

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Five Somali pirates captured during a raid on a hijacked cargo ship in the Arabian Sea were brought Sunday to South Korea, where they could face up to life imprisonment, the coast guard said.

The men were arrested as South Korean commandos raided the South Korean-operated *Samho Jewelry* earlier this month, a week after pirates seized the freighter and its 21 crew members. The commandos rescued all crew members—eight South Koreans, two Indonesians and 11 Myanmar citizens—and killed eight Somali pirates.

None of the crew members was injured except for the South Korean captain, who was shot in the stomach by a pirate. The captain, Seok Hae-gyun, was brought to South Korea on Saturday night and had surgery for his wounds.

On Sunday, the five captured pirates arrived at Gimhae airport in the southeastern South

Korean city of Busan and were quickly put into detention there, coast guard officer Eum Jinkyung said.

Coast guard investigators subsequently began questioning the Somalis on charges that they hijacked the ship, requested a ransom and attempted to kill the captain, another coast guard officer Hahm Un-sik said. By South Korean law, the pirates—if convicted—could be sentenced to life in prison as a maximum penalty, Hahm said.

The suspects told investigators that the dead eight pirates played a key role in the hijacking and shot the captain, according to Yonhap news agency. The coast guard said it couldn't immediately confirm the report.

The *Samho Jewelry* and the freed crew members are headed to Oman. Senior coast guard officer Kim Chung-gyu told a news conference that investigators will be sent to look at the ship after it arrives.

Kim said that investigators will also try to find if the pirates

belong to a group involved in the previous hijackings of South Korean ships.

In October, Somali pirates hijacked a South Korean-operated fishing boat with 43 sailors—two South Korean, two Chinese and 39 Kenyans, but they haven't been released yet. A month later, a supertanker also owned by Samho Shipping and its 24 crew were freed after seven months amid reports that a record ransom of up to \$9.5 million had been paid to Somali pirates.

Piracy off the coast of Somalia—which includes one of the world's busiest shipping lanes—has flourished since the Horn of Africa nation's government collapsed in 1991.

The United States, Germany and the Netherlands have tried other Somali pirate suspects, but efforts to involve Africa in trying piracy cases are faltering and captured pirates frequently are released. In November, a judge in Kenya said that country did not have jurisdiction for attacks outside its waters.

Myanmar parliament to open, but army in control

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Myanmar is preparing to open its first session of parliament in more than two decades, a major step in the ruling military's self-styled transition to democracy but one being carried out with little fanfare or public enthusiasm.

There is muted hope that Monday's convening of the new legislature will be a step, however small, in the right direction for a country that has seen the army rule with impunity since a 1962 coup ended the last legitimate parliamentary democracy. Still, with a quarter of the seats in the upper and lower houses reserved for the military and the remainder dominated by political parties loyal to the outgoing junta, there is little chance for an actual return of power to the people.

The junta for years has been

touting the convening of parliament as the penultimate step in its so-called roadmap to democracy, leaving only the task of having it elect a president. Current junta chief Senior Gen. Than Shwe, however, is expected to remain the country's guiding force, no matter what position he holds in the new regime.

While the general public is curious who may become head of state—even though it is certain to be a prominent member of the junta—there appears to be little popular interest in parliament's opening. Last November's election and the widespread perception the junta cheated to ensure a victory by its proxies has done little to quell criticism that the road map is nothing more than army rule by a different name.

Even the military has done

little to highlight the simultaneous opening of the 440-seat lower house and 224-seat upper house in a massive new building in Naypyitaw, the remote city to which the capital was moved from Yangon in 2005.

There are few if any of the propaganda billboards that normally trumpet momentous state occasions. Neither the press nor the foreign diplomatic community has been invited to attend, which is tantamount to saying "stay away."

While the credibility of the road map was long ago dismissed by opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy party—which boycotted the polls and consequently was dissolved under a new election law—some antimilitary parties prefer to look at the bright side.

and his driver.

Sun Yat-sen's granddaughter dies in Taiwan

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Nora Sun, a former U.S. trade consul and granddaughter of the founder of Asia's first republic in China, has died in Taipei from injuries sustained in a car accident. She was 72. Taiwan's government-owned Central News Agency reported that Sun died Saturday, quoting Shin Kong Memorial Hospital Superintendent Hou Sheng-mou. Hou could not be reached for comment Sunday, but another hospital official confirmed Sun's death. That official spoke on condition of anonymity because she was not authorized to speak to the press.

World

Chaos engulfs Cairo as Mubarak points to successor

CAIRO (AP)—With protests raging, Egypt's president named his intelligence chief as his first-ever vice president on Saturday, setting the stage for a successor as chaos engulfed the capital. Soldiers stood by—a few even joining the demonstrators—and the death toll from five days of anti-government fury rose sharply to 74.

Saturday's fast-moving developments across the north African nation marked a sharp turning point in President Hosni Mubarak's three-decade rule of Egypt.

Residents and shopkeepers in affluent neighborhoods boarded up their houses and stores against looters, who roamed the streets with knives and sticks, stealing what they could and destroying cars, windows and street signs. Gunfire rang out in some neighborhoods.

Tanks and armored personnel carriers fanned out across the city of 18 million, guarding key government buildings, and major tourist and archaeological sites. Among those singled out for special protection was the Egyptian Museum, home to some of the country's most treasured antiquities, and the Cabinet building. The military closed the pyramids on the outskirts of Cairo—Egypt's premier tourist site.

But soldiers made no moves against protesters, even after a curfew came and went and the crowds swelled in the streets, demanding an end to Mubarak's rule and no handoff to the son he had been grooming to succeed him.

"This is the revolution of people of all walks of life," read black graffiti scrolled

Protests across Egypt

Egyptians continue to demand an end to President Hosni Mubarak's 30-year autocratic rule.

Key sites of unrest

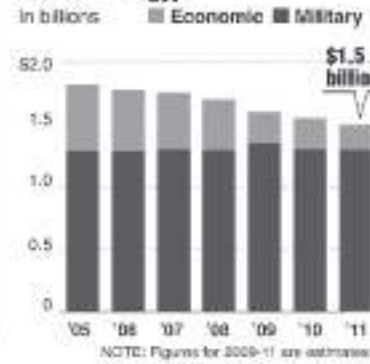
1. Police fire rubber bullets, tear gas at protesters; opposition leader Mohamed ElBaradei put under house arrest; crowds try to storm government
2. Crowds overrun police lines, seize and burn police trucks
3. Thousands protest after prayers; storm police station, free detainees
- 4, 5. Thousands protest
6. Police tear-gas protesters in tourist city

Other developments

- In TV address, Mubarak says he has asked his Cabinet to resign; will move ahead with reforms; defends crackdown on protests
- Government has blocked Internet, cell phone, social networking services
- Army called in to enforce curfew on Cairo streets

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Source: El Jazeera, Reuters, Congressional Research Service, ESRI
Graphic: Judy Treloar

U.S. aid to Egypt



on one army tank in Tahrir Square. "Mubarak, take your son and leave," it said.

Thousands of protesters defied the curfew for the second night, standing their ground in the main Tahrir Square in a resounding rejection of Mubarak's attempt to hang onto power with promises of reform and a new government.

Police protecting the Interior Ministry near the site opened fire at a funeral procession for a dead protester, possibly because it came too close to the force. Clashes broke out and at least two people were killed.

A 43-year-old teacher, Rafta Mubarak, said the appointment of the president's

intelligence chief and longtime confidant, Omar Suleiman, as vice president did not satisfy the protesters.

"This is all nonsense. They will not fool us anymore. We want the head of the snake," he said in the Mediterranean port city of Alexandria. "If he is appointed by Mubarak, then he is just one more member of the gang. We are not speaking about a branch in a tree, we are talking about the roots."

The crackdown on protesters has drawn harsh criticism from the Obama administration and even a threat Friday to reduce a \$1.5 billion foreign aid program if Washington's most important Arab ally escalates the use of force.

WORLD BRIEFS

Russia identifies airport bomber as Caucasus man

MOSCOW (AP)—The suicide bomber who killed 35 people at Moscow's busiest airport was deliberately targeting foreigners, investigators said Saturday, which would mark an ominous new tactic by separatist militants in southern Russia if he was recruited by an Islamist terror cell. Federal investigators know the identity of the bomber, a 20-year-old native of the volatile Caucasus region, where Islamist insurgents have been battling for years for a breakaway state. But the country's top investigative body stopped short of naming him, fearing that it would compromise ongoing attempts to identify and arrest the masterminds of the Domodedovo Airport attack on Jan. 24. The blast also wounded 180 people.

Train crash in Germany kills 10, injures 33

BERLIN (AP)—A head-on train crash in eastern Germany killed 10 people and injured at least 33 others, eight of them severely, local firefighters said Sunday, and police feared the death toll could rise. A passenger and a cargo train crashed head-on near Hordorf village, close to Saxony-Anhalt's state capital Magdeburg, and several cars of the train carrying some 45 passengers derailed and overturned, a spokesman for the district's firefighters said. He declined to be named in line with department policy. Rescue operations were still under way early Sunday, and police had no immediate information as to what could have caused the accident late Saturday evening, regional police spokesman Frank Kuessner said.

Honduras' Lobo: Zelaya wanted to stay in office

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP)—Honduras' president said Saturday that ousted leader Manuel Zelaya once told him point-blank he wanted to stay in power despite a constitutional ban on re-election—the very ambition that opponents alleged to justify the coup that toppled Zelaya. In an interview with opposition radio station Radio Globo, current President Porfirio Lobo said Zelaya asked him to drop his lagging campaign for Honduras' top office, though he did not say what Zelaya allegedly offered him in return.

According to Lobo's account of a conversation in March 2009, three months before the coup, Zelaya remarked that Lobo's opponent was ahead by 15 percentage points in the race.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Indian police question Tibetan spiritual leader

DHARMSALA, India (AP)—Indian authorities are investigating the source of large amounts of money found in a northern Indian monastery that is the headquarters of Tibetan Buddhism's third most important leader, police said Saturday. Police and revenue officials are tracking about \$777,000 found in the Gyuto monastery, the home of Ugyen Thinley Dorje, the 17th Karmapa, said D.S. Minhas, director general of police in the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. The money was in nearly two dozen foreign currencies, including a large amount of Chinese yuan, Minhas told The Associated Press.

Bomber kills deputy governor in south Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A suicide bomber riding a motorcycle packed with explosives rammed into a car carrying the deputy governor of Afghanistan's southern Kandahar province on Saturday, killing him and wounding three of his bodyguards, the Interior Ministry said. The attacker struck as the official, Abdul Latif Ashna, was being driven to work in the provincial capital, said a ministry spokesman, Zemer Bashary. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack. In a text message to reporters, Taliban spokesman Qari Yousef said the suicide bomber killed the deputy governor as well as three of his body guards

Focus

Stimulus funds help wire rural homes for Internet

EAST BURKE, Vt. (AP)—Up in rural northern Vermont, it took until the 1960s to run power lines to some towns—decades after the rest of America got turned on.

These days, it's the digital revolution that remains but a rumor in much of rural America.

Dial-up user Val Houde knows this as well as anybody. After moving here four years ago, the 51-year-old mother of four took a correspondence course for medical transcription, hoping to work from home. She plunked down \$800, took the course, then found out the software wasn't compatible with dial-up Internet, the only kind available to her.

Selling items on eBay, watching videos, playing games online? Forget it. The connection from her home computer is so slow, her online life is one of delays, degraded quality and "buffering" warning messages. So she waits until the day a provider extends broadband to her house.

"I feel like these companies, they don't care about these little pockets of places," she said one night recently, showing a visitor her computer's slow Internet service. "And I know we're not the only ones."

For Houde and millions of other Americans laboring under slow or no Internet service, help is on the way.

Bolstered by billions in federal stimulus money, an effort to expand broadband Internet access to rural areas is under way, an ambitious 21st-century infrastructure project with parallels to the New Deal electrification of the nation's hinterlands in the 1930s and 1940s.

President Barack Obama emphasized the importance of Internet access in his State of the Union address last week.

"To attract new businesses to our shores, we need the fastest, most reliable ways to move people, goods, and information—from high-speed rail to high-speed Internet," Obama said.

In the Depression, it was power to the people—for farm equipment and living-room lamps, cow-milking machines and kitchen appliances. Now, it's online access—to YouTube and digital downloads, to video-conferencing and Facebook, to eBay and Twitter.

"Rural areas all across the country are wrestling with this, somewhat desperately," said Paul Costello, executive director of the Vermont Council on Rural Development. "Young people who grow up with the media will not live where they can't be connected to digital culture. So most rural communities have been behind the eight ball."

Seventy years ago, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt realized that if private industry wouldn't run power lines out to the farthest reaches of rural areas, it would take government money to help make it happen. In 1935,



In this Oct. 2, 2007 file photo, A.J. Bowen of Schupp's Line Construction, Inc. works on fiber-optic installation in Norton, Vt.

the Rural Electrification Administration was established to deliver electricity to the Tennessee Valley and beyond.

Now, money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is doing the same with broadband, which is typically defined as DSL (digital subscriber line), cable modem, fiber optic or fixed wireless.

The stimulus act set aside \$7.2 billion for expansion of broadband access, believing it will spur economic growth, boost educational opportunities and create jobs. The money has jump-started what were existing efforts by states and telecom providers to bridge the digital divide of rural America.

In its national broadband plan issued last year, the Federal Communications Commission pinpointed schools' use of online resources as one of the key targets of the stimulus-funded expansion efforts.

"With broadband, students and teachers can expand instruction beyond the confines of the physical classroom and traditional school day," the plan says. "Broadband can also provide more customized learning opportunities for students to access high-quality, low-cost and personally relevant educational material."

Schools in many rural districts lack that now.

"We sorely need fiber-optic in our community," said Robert Brinkley, director of technology for the North Country Supervisory Union school district in Vermont.

The 13 schools in his district

share a T-1 line whose bandwidth is so small that whenever a video field trip is planned for a class, all the other users on the system have to stop using e-mail first.

"The picture doesn't just get poor, we lose the connection. Whether it's NASA or the Cleveland Museum of Art, we'll lose the connection or it'll drop completely," said Brinkley.

A U.S. Commerce Department report last year showed that 65.9 percent of urban households subscribed to broadband in 2009, compared with 51 percent of rural households. There are several reasons for the rural shortfall, but lack of availability is the most often cited.

Consumers in rural states have been left behind, either because their homes are too far from one another, mountains make construction expensive or providers have lacked the capital to justify the investment.

■ In Kansas, Rural Telephone Service Co., Inc. got \$100 million in stimulus loans and grants to extend broadband into unserved areas.

"Because of the economic climate that we live in—declining population, small farms being bought up by larger operators—the more technology and more access to information that those customers can have, the more likely they are to be able to stay in business," said Rhonda Goddard, the company's chief operating officer. "It's revolutionary out there, for them to have access to the information they need to keep their business running—access to the

markets, being able to buy supplies and equipment from the region instead of just from their local market. It opens doors. It increases competitiveness. It props up business."

■ In Colorado, mountains and vast stretches between farms and ranches on the plains have made it difficult for companies to justify spending millions of dollars to lay fiber optic cable to connect far-flung residents.

There, a public-private partnership won \$100 million in stimulus money to try to expand high-speed Internet access to all Colorado school districts and to libraries and key institutions across the state. Some of the money will go to laying fiber and erecting new microwave towers to deliver broadband—at least—into areas that need them.

■ In Texas, where 96 percent of households have broadband, \$8 million in stimulus money is funding a five-year effort that includes mapping, data collection and technical assistance in hopes of reaching the 285,550 now-unserved households. Dave Osborn, CEO of Valley Telephone Cooperative Inc., said his company serves an area of roughly 1,700 square miles in south Texas with a population of 30,000. Stimulus money is key, he says.

"It takes a whole lot of money to serve this (population)," Osborn said. "At the end of the day, there's no way I can spend \$14,000 on a line and bill a customer \$16 a month. We couldn't do it without (the federal dollars)."

Obama said the broadband

goals far exceed convenience.

"This isn't just about faster Internet or fewer dropped calls," the president said. "It's about connecting every part of America to the digital age. It's about a rural community in Iowa or Alabama where farmers and small business owners will be able to sell their products all over the world. It's about a firefighter who can download the design of a burning building onto a handheld device; a student who can take classes with a digital textbook; or a patient who can have face-to-face video chats with her doctor."

In some parts of rural America, the issue isn't just making broadband available. It's convincing holdouts that there's a benefit to it.

A survey released Jan. 13 by the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association—a trade association for rural telecoms—found that the overall broadband subscriber "take rate" for its member companies is only 55 percent, up from 38 percent a year ago.

"It's kind of one of those 'If you build it, will they come?' things," said CEO Shirley Bloomfield. "It's one thing when you put in phone service. You may only have five customers at first, but you knew people would sign up."

"Now, you put out the broadband ... and you're doing a proposition of 'Do you get enough customers to make it worth your while?'"

In Vermont, the rugged landscape of the Green Mountains, combined with the spread-out

locations of the state's 620,000 people, has blocked or impeded building before—the infrastructure for telephone, transportation and electricity infrastructure, among other things.

The last towns to get electricity were the hamlets of Granby and Victory, in 1963, following years of fundraising, including a "Holiday in the Hills" weekend in 1959 in which residents showed visitors how to get by using oil lamps and wood cookstoves.

Even now, utility crews have to use draught horses to haul poles and cables to places that trucks can't go.

"It's not as easy as some of the other big flat states in the Midwest, where you put the plow down and you just head on out, because they're in sandy soil they can bury their cable in," said Kurt Gruendling, vice president of marketing and business development for Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom.

"In Vermont, in particular, we say we're 'topographically challenged.' We have a lot of nooks and crannies," said Deborah Shannon, director of broadband outreach and coordination for the Vermont Telecommunications Authority.

Former Gov. Jim Douglas and various providers had pledged to get broadband to all corners of Vermont by the end of 2010, but a combination of factors—including the market's collapse in 2008—prevented that.

Enter the stimulus. Vermont Telephone is getting \$116 million in grants and loans to extend wireless broadband to anchor institutions and unserved homes and businesses in Vermont and parts of neighboring New York and New Hampshire.

The Vermont Telecommunications Authority, in conjunction with Internet service provider Sovernet Communications, is using \$33.4 million in stimulus funds to build a 773-mile fiber-optic backbone that will make up the so-called "middle mile" of service, allowing schools, state buildings and community centers to hook up to the main trunk. The "last mile" is from there to the home.

"Without the stimulus, the private sector would not have been able to do this and the state would not have been able to develop its plans to push higher-capacity fiber connections out into our most rural areas," Shannon said.

Meanwhile, Valerie Houde waits.

"I know there are a lot of people out there, like us, who would greatly benefit from having broadband, and with the money the state got for expanding service, it seems something should change, finally, as long as the money goes where it's supposed to and not into politicians' and corporate executives' pockets," she said.

Health & Fitness

First lady: Army health initiative may be a model

By SUSANNE M. SCHAFER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

FORT JACKSON, S.C. (AP)—First lady Michelle Obama said Thursday that the military's push to turn recruits into health-conscious warriors could be a model for making people across the U.S. more focused on fitness and nutrition.

Obama, who has made battling childhood obesity one of her signature causes as first lady, visited the Army's largest training post at Fort Jackson outside Columbia to see what the Army has done, from more rigorous training drills to fat-free milk in its mess halls.

She told Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling, who has worked to overhaul both the soldiers' diets and exercise programs, that she was fascinated by the project.

A lack of fitness is "not just a health issue but a national

security issue," she said, and the military's health initiatives could be a model for youngsters elsewhere.

"A lot of young people around the country could use the same kind of support," she said.

Hertling gave the first lady a military-style briefing, accompanied by colorful slides beamed on three large screens hung on the walls, that detailed how the nation's obesity problems create problems for the Army.

Kids are spending too much time in front of TV and computer screens, not getting enough exercise and drinking too many sugary soft drinks, Hertling said. He said that makes their bones too fragile for military lifestyles.

New soldiers are given exercises for core body strength and stamina. Obama got to see the green salads, fruit and nuts offered in one of the chow lines

at the post and chatted with drill sergeants about the challenges of getting recruits into shape.

The first lady sat with a half-dozen senior trainers, asking them how they dealt with a generation more adept at video games than sports or playground games.

"How are the soldiers reacting to this new training? I'm a mother, and it's all about getting the kids to go outside," she told Staff Sgt. Brian Evans, of East St. Louis, Ill.

"It takes a while before they figure it out, that this food, this exercise, actually works," responded Evans, a 14-year Army veteran who said he'd been deployed seven times to Iraq and four to Afghanistan with Special Operations units. "Hopefully they will take that and adapt it to their lifestyle, so it branches off back to their families."

Obama echoed that message



First lady Michelle Obama sits with soldiers in training, Rudolph Buchanan of Illinois, left, and Kimberley Welsh of Vancouver, Canada, Thursday, Jan. 27, 2011, at Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C.

Personal Trainer

Exercises for a painful back

Walking and water exercise are often recommended for people with back problems; these exercises may also help:

Angry cat*

Arch your back like an angry cat for 5 seconds and release



Warning: If your back hurts, consult a doctor before beginning any kind of exercise



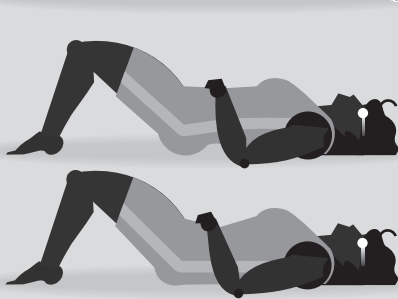
Shoulder pull

Stand straight and pull back shoulders, military-style for 5 seconds, then release



Pelvis tilt

Tighten buttocks to flatten center of back against floor; hold 5 seconds and release



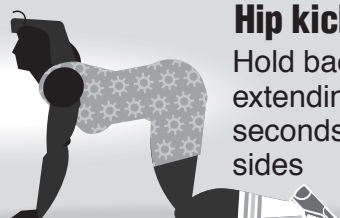
Two knee pull

Slowly lift knees one at a time to chest; touch forehead to knees for 5 seconds; reverse sequence and lower feet to floor



Hip kick*

Hold back straight while extending leg; hold for 5 seconds; alternate sides



*Should not be done by people with a ruptured disk or spondylolisthesis



Half-situp

Raise head and shoulders, then lower; don't hold breath



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Graphic:
Paul
Trap

Source: University of Washington Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine

in her address later in the day to the 1,100 soldiers graduating after 10 weeks of basic training and recognized their effort to choose healthier foods.

"I know these past 10 weeks haven't been easy," she told the soldiers. "But the truth is, you never gave up, you never gave in, you pushed yourself to your limits and beyond."

To wild cheers, Obama praised the families attending for letting their young men and women serve their country despite the risks.

"We want you to know how proud we are of all that you have achieved. We are grateful to you all," she said.

Fort Jackson's commander, Maj. Gen. James Milano, said the first lady's visit was a big boost for military families, particularly those who have endured years of deployments and

separations.

"It's a huge benefit for us, to have her come here and visit. This is a great day, a chance for her to come and talk directly to Army soldiers and their families," Milano said.

Also Thursday, Obama ap-

peared on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" to urge Americans to support the struggles of U.S. military families. The first lady said she and Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, plan to launch a campaign in March to support military families.



First lady Michelle Obama talks with Lt. Col. Sonya Cable during a tour of Fort Jackson's "Go for Green" dining program, which encourages healthy eating, Thursday, Jan. 27, 2011 in Fort Jackson, S.C.

Smoking, obesity why US lifespans lag a bit

WASHINGTON (AP)—The U.S. spends more on health care than any other nation yet has worse life expectancy than many—and a new report blames smoking and obesity.

That may sound surprising, considering that public smoking is being stamped out here while it's common in parts of Europe. And obesity is a growing problem around the world.

But the U.S. led those unhealthy trends, lighting up and fattening up a few decades ahead of other high-income countries. And the long-term consequences are life expectancy a few years shorter than parts of Europe and Japan, the National Research Council reported Tuesday.

In the U.S., life expectancy at

birth was 80.8 years for women and 75.6 years for men in 2007. In France, life expectancy for women was 84.4 years and 77.4 for men. And in Japan, it was nearly 86 years for women and 79.2 for men.

But thanks to the decline in smoking over the last 20 years, the life expectancy of U.S. men is expected to rapidly improve in coming decades. That improvement will be a little slower for U.S. women, whose peak smoking rates occurred several years after men's.

In countries where women's life expectancies are particularly high, women never smoked as much as men, said gerontologist Eileen Crimmins of the University of Southern California, who co-chaired the report. But in some Northern European

countries, women's smoking was more similar to Americans' and life expectancy is too.

While smoking is the key factor, the report also said obesity may account for a fifth to a third of the U.S. shortfall in life expectancy.

It's hard to predict if that impact will continue, Crimmins said. Treatments may allow people to survive obesity's damage for longer, although specialists are particularly concerned about the lifespan of children who live all their lives obese rather than getting fat after they're grown.

As for all those health care bills, "it's not enough to trump a lot of our behaviors," Crimmins said.

The council is part of the National Academy of Sciences, an independent organization chartered by Congress to advise the government on scientific matters.

ON THE NET

<http://national-academies.org/>

Health & Fitness

Stars, Shrine ready for Sunday's SAG Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A sea of famous faces will fill the Shrine Exhibition Center Sunday for the Screen Actors Guild Awards, so the theater—and the famous faces—spent Saturday getting ready.

A spate of stars, including Oscar nominee Jeremy Renner, popped by the Shrine to rehearse their lines for Sunday's show, which honors the year's top performances in TV and film.

The Shrine Exhibition Center, which is basically a giant concrete box, has been transformed into an elegant dining room for the festivities. Crystal chandeliers dangle from the ceiling above tables dressed in black.

Placards saved the stars' seats Saturday. The nominated cast of "Glee" will spill out over three tables near the stage. James Franco, Nicole Kidman, Keith Urban, Natalie Portman, Mila Kunis and the stars of "The Social Network" will have front row seats. Behind them will be Annette Bening and the nominated cast of "The Kids are All Right," plus a few tables for the nominated ensembles of "30 Rock" and "Mad Men."

Renner read over his lines in the green room—decked out in white leather, black lacquer and orchids—before stepping out onto the ivory-and-silver stage.

Dressed in sneakers, blue jeans and a gray pullover, he practiced with a stand-in to present the award for male actor in a TV movie or miniseries. A stage manager explained that if the winner is absent, Renner should accept the award on his behalf.

"I finally won one!" he



AP
Actor Jeremy Renner holds up a SAG Awards statuette during rehearsal for the SAG Awards at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles on Saturday, Jan. 29, 2011.

said as he pretended to claim the trophy.

In less than five minutes, his rehearsal was done.

"Thanks for coming by. Have a good day tomorrow," the stage manager told Renner as he walked away.

But seconds later, the actor returned to the stage. He just wanted to see where he'd be sitting.

In the front row, of course.

"Yeah, it's a good seat," he said with a smile.

Renner is among a star-studded list of presenters that includes Jeff Bridges, Jon Hamm, Nicole Kidman, Eva Longoria, Justin Timberlake, Tina Fey, Geoffrey Rush, Alec Baldwin, Mark Wahlberg, Natalie Portman and Betty White.

The SAG awards will be presented at 8 p.m. ET and broadcast live on TNT and TBS.

Foundation aims for new instruments across W.Va.

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP)—In the nine years Leigh Ann Smith has taught music in West Virginia's Mingo County, she's had to do it with a misfit collection of used instruments: a few trumpets, some saxophones and a snare drum.

It was never enough to start a full-fledged band at Mingo County's Kermit Area School. That changed when the school got \$30,000 in instruments and equipment from the VH1 Save the Music Foundation.

Smith said she knew from her students' reactions at an assembly to announce the donation that lives were about to change.

"When the kids came to class, they were just bouncing off the walls," she said. "This was a great boost for our music program. Most of these kids couldn't afford instruments on their own."

Kermit is one of eight schools

in West Virginia to get a boost from the foundation, which for the first time since its inception in 1997 is aiming to get new instruments at a school in every county in one state.

"We're looking to at first take the program statewide so that we have a footprint in all 55 counties," said Rob Davidson, the foundation's program director. "And then long-term the goal is to fully restore music education K through 8, which is where our mission is, throughout the state. That will take many, many years. But that's our end goal."

That's a lot of instruments. While the foundation fully funded the instruments for the first eight schools, officials hope state and local agencies will match future donations.

Save The Music, dedicated to restoring instrumental music programs in public elemen-

tary and middle schools, has donated \$47 million in new musical equipment and helped music programs in 1,700 schools in 100 cities nationwide. The foundation requires schools to have an instrumental music teacher and provide music instruction.

Randall Reid-Smith, commissioner of the state Division of Culture and History, said foundation officials have committed about \$1.7 million to equipping one school in every county with instruments over the next six years.

At Kermit, all 28 of Smith's sixth-graders now have something to play. VH1's donation included 11 clarinets, eight flutes, six trumpets, four trombones, three alto saxophones, and a ready-made percussion section with snare and bass drums, cymbals and marching bells.

Fincher, Hooper vie for top Directors Guild prize

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The makers of Academy Awards favorites "The Social Network" and "The King's Speech" are among those competing for top honors from the Directors Guild of America, one of Hollywood's last prize shows before the Oscars.

"The Social Network" filmmaker David Fincher is considered the front-runner for Saturday night's guild awards, whose winner almost always goes on to claim the directing prize at the Oscars.

Tom Hooper—director of "The King's Speech," which leads the Oscars with 12 nominations—also is up for the guild honor, along with Darren Aronofsky for "Black Swan," Christopher Nolan for "Inception" and David O. Russell for "The Fighter."

Once again, Nolan is odd man out at the Directors Guild honors, the only contender who was not nominated for the directing Oscar. The same thing happened to Nolan two years ago, when he was up for the guild prize



AP
In this Jan. 31, 2009 file photo, director David Fincher is shown backstage at the Directors Guild of America Awards in Los Angeles.

for "The Dark Knight" but was overlooked for a best-director nomination at the Oscars.

Joining Aronofsky, Fincher, Hooper and Russell in the Oscar race for director are Joel and Ethan Coen for "True Grit."

Only six times in the 62-year history of the guild awards has the winner failed to take home the Oscar for best director.

Fincher, a past guild and Oscar nominee for "The Curious

Case of Benjamin Button," won the directing prize at the Golden Globes for "The Social Network," which also earned him best-director honors from key critics groups.

The Directors Guild prizes are followed this weekend by Sunday night's Screen Actors Guild Awards, the last big honors before the Feb. 27 Oscars.

Besides its feature-film prize, the Directors Guild also will present awards in documentary, television and commercial categories.

Presenters include last year's feature-film recipient, "The Hurt Locker" director Kathryn Bigelow, the first woman to win the guild award and directing Oscar. Other presenters include Bigelow's ex-husband, "Avatar" creator James Cameron, whom she beat for Hollywood's top directing prizes a year ago, and such stars and filmmakers as Steven Spielberg, Francis Ford Coppola, Clint Eastwood, Leonardo DiCaprio and Helen Mirren.

DEATH AND FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENT

JESUS LIZAMA KISA

Born to life on February 20, 1946 and was called to his eternal rest on January 23, 2011

Survived By:

Wife:

Daughter:

Sister:

Emelita Mauricio Kisa
Jessica M. Kisa (Jayce)
Terry Lizama Kisa (Raymond & Verlyn [Trevor Jude & Jared Teagan], Vincent & Britney [Vinysha Keana, Victoria Kiara and Vinson Blas], Vanessa & Shawn [Shalei Terrie])

Reared Sister:

Dolores & Akiyoshi Yamagishi (Bob, Evan, Calvin & Rima)

Predeceased By:

Parents:

Father-In-Law:

Mother-In-Law:

†Magdalena Mendiola Lizama Kisa "BATITANG"
†Antonio Camacho Kisa
†Santos Loyola Mauricio
†Florentina Gonzaga Sta Ana

He will also be missed by numerous uncles, aunties, nieces, nephews, family & friends.

Daily mass is being held at 6:00am at Mount Carmel Cathedral Church.

On February 1, 2011, his remains will be escorted from CHC to Mount Carmel Cathedral Church at 7:30am for viewing and last respects. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00am, followed by interment Services at the Chalan Kanoa Cemetery.

Your prayers and thoughts are greatly appreciated.

THE FAMILY

OWN completing its one-month anniversary

NEW YORK (AP)—As it nears its one-month mark, the Oprah Winfrey Network has grown its prime-time audience by one-third over the network it replaced.

OWN's all-day viewership is up 25 percent over the year-ago audience for Discovery Health, the channel OWN claimed when it signed on Jan. 1.

Christina Norman, the network's CEO, calls its first month "an encouraging start" and declares, "The idea works."

"The audience understands what this is supposed to be," she said Friday from the network's Los Angeles headquarters. "It is not a network built around a person. It's a network built around a person's world view."

That person, of course, is Oprah Winfrey, who is ending her weekday syndicated talk show this spring to concentrate full-time on her cable startup, which is available in 80 million homes.

An average of 297,000 viewers are watching OWN in prime time, with an average of 145,000 viewers tuned in during the full day, according to



In this May 3, 2010 file photo, Oprah Winfrey arrives at the Metropolitan Museum of Art Costume Institute gala in New York.

Nielsen Co. data measuring the network from Jan. 1 to Jan. 23.

The network launched with seven new series, six of which Norman said have made a promising start.

The exception is "Your OWN Show: Oprah's Search for the Next TV Star," which has experienced audience erosion.

"It hasn't really found its audience, and that's kind of a drag," said Norman. "But you live and learn."

Even so, it will air to its completion, with the winner of the competition awarded a show on OWN, as planned.

"Somebody's going to win, and somebody's life is really going to change," Norman said.

In February, the network will introduce "Our America With Lisa Ling" as well as "What Would You Do?," an acquisition from ABC News, plus two more real-life series originally set for a later debut: "Breaking Down the Bars," which takes viewers into a women's prison, and "Searching For..." which follows the work of a professional investigative genealogist.

In daytime, "The Gayle King Show" after two weeks on the air is attracting an average of 118,000 viewers for its two daily airings.

But OWN has announced that plans for another daytime venture, a talk show similar to ABC's "The View," have been scrapped.

"For me, it's about doubling down on what's working," Norman said. "We're focusing on Gayle and prime time. That's where our energy is best spent."

"The goal of OWN is to build it over the course of a year, as more new shows come on," she said, adding: "We're still telling people where OWN is."

Bruno Mars taking plea deal in Vegas cocaine case

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Pop singer Bruno Mars is taking a plea deal in Las Vegas to be allowed to pay a fine, serve probation and have a felony cocaine possession charge against him dismissed, authorities said.

The 25-year-old Grammy nominee is due before a Las Vegas judge Feb. 4 to waive an evidentiary hearing so he can plead guilty and be sentenced in state court, his attorneys and Clark County District Attorney David Roger said.

Mars' real name is Peter Hernandez. Defense lawyers David Chesnoff and Blair Berk said that if he pays a \$2,000 fine, performs 200 hours of community service, completes drug counseling and stays out of trouble for a year, no conviction will remain on his record.

"Bruno is very appreciative he is being given this opportunity as a first offender not to suffer any conviction and instead to have his charge dismissed," Berk told The Associated Press. "He is taking all of this quite seriously."

The plea agreement will let Mars step past the Las Vegas

cocaine charge a week before the 53rd Grammy Awards show in Los Angeles.

Mars is nominated for seven awards, including best male pop vocal for his hit, "Just the Way You Are." He also co-wrote "(Expletive) You" and was featured on B.o.B's "Nothin' on You"—a nominee for record of the year.

He spent a night in the Clark County jail in Las Vegas after his arrest in September following a performance at a Las Vegas nightclub.

An arrest report said a Hard Rock Hotel & Casino bathroom attendant noticed a man taking a long time in a stall with a bag of a white, powdered substance just before 2 a.m., and summoned security. The hotel-casino is separate from the restaurant chain with the same name.

Police said Mars handed over a bag containing 2.6 grams of cocaine, and told the arresting officer he'd never used drugs before.

Mars was a child entertainer in Hawaii before moving to Los Angeles in 2002 to pursue his entertainment career.

Mexican actress pleads guilty in marriage case



Mexico actress Fernanda Romero, left, arrives at federal court Friday Jan. 28, 2011 in Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Mexican actress pleaded guilty Friday to making a false statement to immigration authorities in a case alleging she engaged in a phony marriage to gain U.S. residency.

U.S. District Judge Manuel Real told Fernanda Romero to return for sentencing on April 11 but gave no indication of what her sentence might be.

The maximum would be five years in prison, plus a fine and probation, but prosecutors have not sought jail time.

Romero had small roles in several films, including "Drag Me to Hell," but is best known for her role in the Mexican soap

opera "Eternamente Tuya."

Federal immigration agents sat at the prosecution table in court but did not speak. The issue of whether she could be deported was not raised at the hearing. It could be addressed at sentencing.

The actress had been living in the United States for 10 years, occasionally working as a model, before she and Kent Ross married in 2005.

Prosecutors contended they married so Romero could obtain permanent residency then lived in separate homes and dated other people.

The couple were charged early last year. A mistrial of the

case was declared in September after jurors reported deliberations had grown hostile. The plea deal avoids a retrial.

The guilty plea came on a limited section of the original allegations against Romero, with the remaining charges to be dismissed at sentencing.

The statement at issue was made by Romero to immigration authorities when they were investigating the marriage. She told them Ross and her mother "hang out all the time," which authorities said was false.

"In truth and in fact defendant's mother and co-defendant Ross had only met on a few occa-

sions," the plea agreement states.

Romero declined to give interviews but her lawyer, Michael Nasatir, issued a statement on her behalf.

"I deeply regret my making this misstatement to (immigration officials) and take full responsibility for my actions. I apologize to all of those who have supported me through this difficult time," the statement said.

Ross previously agreed to plead guilty to falsely stating on immigration forms that he and Romero were living together in 2005 and 2006. His plea hearing was postponed until Feb. 4.

Chris Brown completes domestic violence program

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Chris Brown has completed a domestic violence counseling program required as part of the singer's guilty plea to assaulting then-girlfriend Rihanna nearly two years ago.

On Friday, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Patricia Schnegg congratulated the 21-year-old R&B performer for finishing the yearlong program.

As a result of completing the required counseling, Brown will no longer have to appear

in court every three months for progress report hearings.

Brown is serving five years of probation after pleading guilty last year to assaulting pop star Rihanna in a rented sports car after a pre-Grammy Awards party.

City News Service reports the judge said she would consider lifting the protective order against Brown at a later date. The order requires Brown to stay at least 100 yards away from Rihanna.

More trouble for 'You Light Up My Life' songwriter

NEW YORK (AP)—More sour notes have hit the "You Light Up My Life" songwriter accused of molesting 13 women lured to his New York City apartment for supposed acting auditions.

Prosecutors said Friday they plan to seek testimony from at least 12 more women who say they've been molested by Joseph Brooks. For various legal reasons, their cases won't be added to his indictment.

Brooks has pleaded not guilty

to predatory sexual assault and other charges. His lawyer said he believes other women can testify that Brooks invited them for auditions and nothing happened. His trial date has not been set.

The composer's son, Nicholas Brooks, has pleaded not guilty in the death of a swimsuit designer who was found strangled and drowned in a bathtub at the trendy Soho House hotel.

Friends?

Zuckerberg, Eisenberg face off on 'SNL'

NEW YORK (AP)—Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg and his “The Social Network” doppelganger Jesse Eisenberg made friends on “Saturday Night Live.”

Zuckerberg joined host Eisenberg for the opening monologue of the show Saturday. The two said they had never met, despite Eisenberg playing Zuckerberg in the widely hailed, Oscar-nominated film. Cast member Andy Samberg tried his own

impression of the Facebook CEO but quickly left—exclaiming “Awkward!” once Zuckerberg took the stage.

Eisenberg told Zuckerberg that he liked him on “60 Minutes” and then asked if he had seen “The Social Network.” Zuckerberg, who has called the film inaccurate, responded that he had seen the film and that it was “interesting.”

Eisenberg accepted that answer and the two high-fived.



In this May, 26, 2010 file photo, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg talks about the social network site's new privacy settings in Palo Alto, Calif.

Source: Sheen 911 caller said actor 'intoxicated'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The production of Charlie Sheen's hit TV show is on hold because of his return to rehab, which came after a 911 caller said the actor was intoxicated and in pain.

One of Sheen's neighbors told an emergency operator Thursday that the actor was “intoxicated” and complaining of abdominal and chest pains, according to a person familiar with the call. The person was not authorized to publicly discuss details and spoke Friday on condition of anonymity.

Copies of the call probably won't be ready for release by the Los Angeles Fire Department until Monday, a department spokesman said.

Sheen, 45, was taken to a Los Angeles area hospital and was there until around midnight Thursday, said his publicist, Stan Rosenfield, who cited the actor's history of hernia problems.

Rosenfield said Friday that Sheen was in rehab, but he did not say why.

“Charlie Sheen has voluntarily entered an undisclosed rehabilitation center today,” the spokesman said. “He is most grateful to all who have expressed their concern.”

The terse statement noted that no additional information will be provided and asked that Sheen's privacy be respected.

CBS, production company Warner Bros. Television and executive producer Chuck Lorre said in a joint statement that Sheen's rehab has prompted a halt on production of “Two and a Half Men.”

“We are profoundly concerned for his health and well-being, and support his decision,” the companies and Lorre said.

Sixteen of the show's 24-episode order have been taped, with 14 aired so far.

The latest fallout from Sheen's chaotic life came two weeks after CBS' top entertainment executive said the actor's off-camera actions haven't affected his work as the star of

TV's most popular comedy, the centerpiece of CBS' Monday comedy lineup. Sheen's program has increased its audience by 2 percent over last season, the Nielsen Co. said. He signed a new two-year contract at the end of last season that makes him one of the highest-paid actors on prime-time television.

Sheen's headline-making behavior has included a wild night that left a New York hotel room in shambles and sent him to a hospital, and a guilty plea last summer to assaulting his wife in Aspen, Colo. Sheen filled gossip pages again this month by spending a weekend partying in Las Vegas.

His latest hospitalization was his third in as many months. It came after a 911 call made on Sheen's behalf by neighbor Dr. Paul Nassif. The plastic and reconstructive surgeon, along with his wife, Adrienne Maloof-Nassif, are in the reality show

“The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills.”

“We are so glad that Charlie made the decision to seek the assistance of a rehabilitation center today,” Nassif and his wife said in a statement. “This is something that his friends and family have pushed for, and we wish him all the love and support he will need in the coming days.”

Last February, Sheen entered rehab for an unspecified problem, forcing his sitcom to temporarily suspend production.

Earlier this month, CBS Entertainment President Nina Tassler was asked about Sheen at a news conference with TV reporters.

“We have a high level of concern. How can we not?” she said, adding the situation can't be viewed simplistically. The actor does his job on “Two and a Half Men” reliably well, she said.

Dempsey takes on role of producer in new film

PARK CITY, Utah (AP)—Actor Patrick Dempsey wanted to do something “completely different” with his new film “Flypaper,” so he signed on as one of its producers.

While promoting the movie at the Sundance Film Festival this week, The “Grey's Anatomy” actor described the experience as sometimes “painful,” where there were days he

“didn't want to show up.” In the end he believes pushing himself outside his comfort zone was a good thing.

“Flypaper,” a comedy about a bank robbery, also stars Ashley Judd and Tim Blake Nelson. Dempsey believes the outcome of the experience was “very good” and would “probably” produce another film in the future.



Actor Patrick Dempsey, a cast member in “Flypaper,” is interviewed at its premiere during the 2011 Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, on Friday, Jan. 28, 2011.

Man's dog outranks wife in household pecking order

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I met my husband, “Monty,” shortly after he lost his wife of 14 years. Monty has two dogs, but the one I have issues with is “Ginger.”

I have never seen a dog act like her. Ginger acts more like a wife than a dog. She clings to Monty to the point he doesn't have any time alone. She'll sit outside the shower until he is done. If he takes a bath, Ginger sits on the edge of the tub. She runs to him when he gets home from work to greet him before I do. As she's running ahead of me, she looks back as if she's worried I'll beat her to him.

It's as if she thinks she's his wife! She sits next to Monty on the couch when we're watching television. I hesitate telling her to move so I can sit next to my husband because he treats his dogs like gold. His excuse? “They were here for me when my wife died.” I'm sympathetic to that, but where do I fit in?

Ginger bullies the other dog by growling at her and bumping into her when the other one tries to get Monty's attention. I'm feeling jealous because sometimes my husband neglects my physical needs and is more affectionate with the dogs. What do I do?

JEALOUS OF THE FOUR-LEGGED MISTRESS

DEAR JEALOUS: When Monty's first wife died, Ginger became the alpha female in the house. Your husband was depressed and lonely, and he allowed or encouraged it. It is now up to him to retrain Ginger so she learns to defer to you because your place is beside your husband—and not just on the couch.

If you haven't told Monty that you need a higher rank in the pack, do it now. And if he isn't willing to make some changes, including taking care of more of your physical needs, insist the two of you talk to a licensed marriage counselor. (And maybe to the Dog Whisperer.)

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I'm a college student who has been looking up friends from my past, ranging from elementary to high school. One of my close friends from elementary school was a boy named “Martin.” We were close because we were sort of the outcasts of our class.

I recently contacted a friend who knew Martin. He told me that Martin had become addicted to hard drugs and is now in jail. I have not been able to stop crying over this. Martin was the one who made me happy about school—a kindred spirit.

I blame myself because I moved over the summer break and never got a chance to say goodbye to Martin. When I visited the school again, Martin came up to me, gave me a hug and demanded to know why I left him! We had been there for each other when others had not.

I know I can't change the past, but I feel if I had been there I could have stopped him from getting into the trouble he did. I can't think about our good times without being sad about his grim future. How can I get over this?

CRYING FOR A FRIEND IN LOUISVILLE, KY.

DEAR CRYING: Please stop blaming yourself for the path that your childhood friend chose. People do not become drug addicts because a friend from elementary school moved away. Whatever led to his substance abuse, it wasn't you. Because this has hit you so hard emotionally, make an appointment to visit your student health center and talk to a counselor about your feelings of guilt.

While what Martin has done to himself is tragic, it's still not too late for him to kick his habit and straighten out his life. This has nothing to do with you, and you should not make it your problem.

■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

■■■

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order “How to Have a Lovely Wedding.” Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby—Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

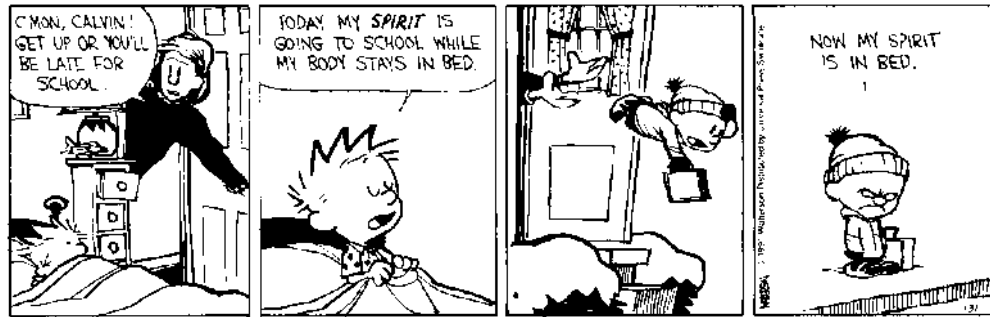


This Jan. 28, 2009 file photo shows Charlie Sheen in Los Angeles.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



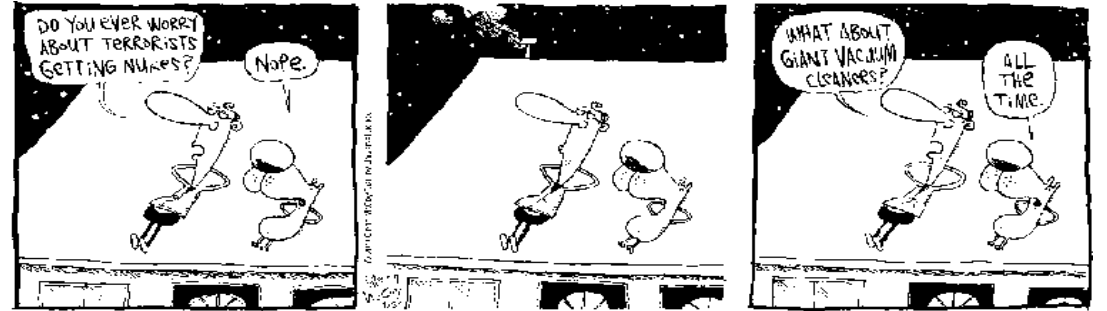
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Humpty Dumpty, e.g.
4 Recede
7 Stroller
11 Let fall
13 Pitch
14 Emanation
15 Comical
16 Cassius
17 Foot
18 Follows
20 Lascivious
22 Help
24 Understand
28 Self-indulgent spender
32 Cohort of
33 Owl's call
34 Auction offer
36 Always
37 Draw a conclusion
39 Clothing fasteners

DOWN

1 Taro root
2 Snatch
3 Vanished
4 Greek vowel
5 "I Love Lucy" star
6 Concise
7 Bore an expense
8 Scoot
9 Curved line
10 — jongg
12 "Listen up!"
19 Madam's counterpart
21 Existed
23 Society
25 Bees' home
26 Finished
27 Fourth planet
28 Caprice
29 Top-notch
30 Couch
31 Claiborne of fashion
35 Quick swim
38 de Janeiro
40 "The Raven" writer
42 American bird
45 Rotary phone feature
47 Time-consuming
48 Norway's capital
49 Timid
50 Visibility hindrance
51 Under the weather
52 "Curse you!"
54 Phys. ed. venue

Solution time: 24 mins.

Saturday's answer 1-31

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/relay phones. (18+ or y; A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Justin Timberlake, 30; Portia de Rossi, 38; Minnie Driver, 41; Nolan Ryan, 64

Happy Birthday: It's up to you to make choices that will alter your life for the better. Determination and discipline are your vehicles to better times. Clear up the past so you can pave your way to a better future. Changing the way you do things will lead to a new and interesting lifestyle. Live, love and laugh. Your numbers are 6, 11, 13, 24, 27, 31, 48

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Not everyone is in your corner, so decide who can be trusted. Don't be afraid to change your mind or your direction if you feel it will help the outcome of a situation you face. Consistency is important. ★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Keep things out in the open. Communication and sharing with others should be tantamount. There is plenty to look forward to as long as you finish what you start and honor your promises. ★★★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Listen to background chatter and you'll pick up valuable information. An opportunity that can help you change your professional status is apparent. Ask someone you've worked with in the past to put in a good word for you. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You'll be more accepting and adaptable, so make a point of changing what isn't working in your life. No one else will do it for you, so gather up your thoughts and move forward with

your plans. Work from home or put extra effort into your environment. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You'll be drawn to different cultures, lifestyles or ways of doing things. It will be vital that you aren't a chameleon, copying someone you look up to or believe in. If what you're getting doesn't measure up to what you want, move on. ★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Step up and take responsibility. Your actions will create greater respect and the opportunity to be given interesting projects to work on in the future. Networking and pulling people together will enable you to position yourself well. ★★★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Just because someone wants something right away doesn't mean you have to succumb to the demand. Pace yourself. Emotional concern regarding home and family will be difficult to deal with. Don't risk what you've worked so hard to accomplish. ★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): A proposal that will bring you greater security should be considered. Don't sit idle when interacting with others is what's required. Thinking too small or waiting too long will be your downfall. ★★★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Consider making a move or changing your living quarters to better suit your needs. Hard work, discipline and taking action will do the trick. Make your presence felt by the business people who can help you secure your position for some time to come. ★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't allow anyone to push you into something you don't care to do. Added responsibilities will leave you with little time to deal with someone else's problems. Focus more on your personal life. ★★★



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Any chance you are given to make positive changes must be utilized. Stability and advancement can be yours if you are willing to make the effort required. There is nothing holding you back, so rethink your strategy and get moving. ★★★



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Interact with someone you need in your corner in order to get a project or plan off the ground. Don't let ego or jealousy stand in the way of victory. Sometimes it's best to take a back seat in order to get what you want or need. ★★★★★

Birthday Baby: You are strong-willed, determined and aggressive. You have no boundaries. You see, you do and you experiment.

Eugenia's Web sites: eugenialast.com for confidential consultations, myspace.com/eugenialast for Eugenia's blog, astroadvice.com for fun

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

7	8		1		6		5	3
		4				9		
3	2						4	1
		2	7		9	4		
	7			3			8	
	8	5		1	7			
6	9						1	4
		7				3		
8	5		4		3		7	2

Difficulty Level ★

1/31

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Saturday's SUDOKU Answer

9	5	7	6	2	8	4	3	1
4	3	8	5	7	1	9	6	2
1	2	6	3	4	9	7	8	5
3	9	4	2	1	5	8	7	6
5	7	1	4	8	6	3	2	9
6	8	2	7	9	3	1	5	4
7	6	3	1	5	4	2	9	8
2	1	9	8	6	7	5	4	3
8	4	5	9	3	2	6	1	7

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID
OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The letters spell the Wonderword.

CELEBRITIES ON SESAME STREET

Solution: 8 letters

A	I	L	A	H	A	M	S	S	O	R	E	D	A	N
P	M	J	E	S	S	E	N	I	L	E	C	E	A	P
I	A	A	M	O	Y	O	Y	R	R	A	L	M	E	R
R	Y	C	B	W	D	N	E	G	E	L	L	R	Z	Y
O	E	K	©	O	D	O	N	N	E	L	L	S	A	O
B	R	S	©	N	A	I	R	B	U	M	U	N	R	R
E	O	O	©	D	F	S	A	L	A	P	A	I	E	
R	M	N	©	E	A	L	A	N	E	E	A	B	M	U
T	A	C	A	R	L	N	T	R	J	H	N	B	O	H
S	Z	F	G	I	C	R	M	F	A	L	A	O	R	A
A	I	O	A	A	O	A	E	D	R	N	I	R	E	N
W	U	S	S	H	N	L	L	A	R	K	D	E	N	O
Y	G	T	S	N	C	U	N	D	E	R	W	O	O	D
E	E	E	Y	D	R	A	W	O	H	O	R	N	E	
R	L	R	W	A	L	T	E	R	S	T	S	E	U	G

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Brian, Celine, Cool, Diana, Donahue, Falco, Foster, Guests, Horne, Howard Jackson, Jesse, Krall, Labella, Lagasse, Lancaster, Larry, Legend, Leguizamo, Mahalia, Mayer, Miraz, Morero, Nader, Obama, O'Donnell, Perlman, Pryor, Ripa, Robbins, Roberts, Ross, Sarandon, Sawyer, Short, Superman, Ullman, Underwood, Walters, Wonder, Wyndol, Yoon, Yo Yo Ma
Last Saturday's Answer: The Factor
Word collected from Wonderword. Words are 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

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Spurs first to 40 victories, down Rockets



SAN ANTONIO (AP)—Manu Ginobili scored 22 points and the San Antonio Spurs became the first to reach 40 wins this season, beating the Houston Rockets 108-95 on Saturday night.

Richard Jefferson added 18 points to help the Spurs win their 18th in a row at home. But it was San Antonio's last game at home for three weeks with the Spurs embarking on their annual Rodeo Road Trip.

The NBA-best Spurs (40-7) will play nine straight on the road heading into the All-Star game, in which Spurs coach Gregg Popovich will direct the West squad.

Luis Scola led the Rockets with 23 points and 10 rebounds.

Bucks 91, Nets 81

In Milwaukee, Australian Andrew Bogut had 17 points and 18 rebounds to help Milwaukee to its third consecutive win.

Carlos Delfino led Milwaukee in scoring with 21 points and Keyon Dooling had 14 points and nine assists. Brook Lopez scored 26 points for New Jersey.

Mavericks 102, Hawks 91

In Dallas, Germany's Dirk Nowitzki scored 19 points and Jason Terry added 18 points and a season-high 11 assists to help Dallas improve to 5-1 following a six-game losing streak.

Jason Kidd had 12 points and eight rebounds, and Tyson Chandler also had 12 points for the Mavericks.

Kings 102, Hornets 96

In Sacramento, California, DeMarcus Cousins had 25 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists

as Sacramento ended New Orleans's winning streak at 10 games.

Sacramento never trailed in winning consecutive games for just the second time all season.

Fouled-plagued Tyreke Evans had nine of his 18 points in the fourth quarter for the Kings with Samuel Dalembert adding 16 points.

David West scored 21 points for the Hornets, who were looking to set a franchise record with 11 straight

victories.

Grizzlies 107, Wizards 93

In Memphis, Zach Randolph had 24 points and 20 rebounds, Darrell Arthur added a career-high 22 points and Memphis kept Washington winless on the road this season.

Mike Conley and Tony Allen added 15 points each to help Memphis improve to 5-1 in its last six games.

John Wall led the Wizards with 14

points and eight assists. The loss was the fourth straight for the Wizards, and left them 0-23 on the road.

Bulls 110, Pacers 89

In Chicago, Carlos Boozer had 24 points and 10 rebounds and Derrick Rose added 20 points despite two stomach ulcers to help Chicago to a comfortable 21-point win over Indiana.

The Bulls improved to 11-0 against Central teams while remaining the lone unbeaten team against its own division. Josh McRoberts led Indiana with a career-high 20 points.

Atlanta with 27 points.

Timberwolves 103, Raptors 87

In Minneapolis, Kevin Love scored his NBA-leading 42nd double-double of the season with 21 points and 12 rebounds as Minnesota handed Toronto its 11th straight loss.

Minnesota ended a six-game losing streak, mainly by holding Toronto to 33.7 percent shooting—the lowest this season for both sides. Andrea Bargnani and Ed Davis each had 15 points for Toronto.

Clippers 103, Bobcats 88

In Los Angeles, Blake Griffin had 24 points and 10 rebounds as Los Angeles extended its home winning streak to eight.

The victory allowed the Clippers to match the 1992-93 squad for the longest home winning streak since the franchise moved from San Diego to Los Angeles for the 1994-95 season. Griffin scored his 38th double-double of the season and 32nd in 33 games, shooting 11 for 23 in 41 minutes.

Stephen Jackson and reserve Gerald Henderson each scored 14 points for Charlotte.



San Antonio Spurs' Manu Ginobili (20), of Argentina, shoots while surrounded by Houston Rockets defenders Patrick Patterson (54), Luis Scola (4), Chase Budinger (10) and Courtney Lee (5) during the third quarter of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, Jan. 29, 2011, in San Antonio.

Knicks' Williams, Hawks' Williams suspended for throwing punches

NEW YORK (AP)—The Atlanta Hawks Marvin Williams was suspended for two games and the New York Knicks' Shawne Williams one game for throwing punches Friday night.

Marvin Williams started things when he shoved Shawne Williams in the back as they ran up the court with 43 seconds left in the Hawks' 111-102 victory. The NBA cited Marvin Williams on Saturday for throwing punches and fighting, while Shawne Williams got a one-game ban for throwing a punch during an altercation.

Both suspensions are without pay.

Marvin Williams missed the Hawks' game at Dallas on Saturday night and also will sit out at home against Toronto on Wednesday night. Shawne Williams will sit out when the Knicks host Detroit on Sunday.

Hawks coach Larry Drew accepted the length of Marvin Williams' sus-

pension without protest.

"There was no real expectations on the length as far as I was concerned," Drew said. "I didn't even see the instant replay. I knew something would take place as far as a suspension. The league made a ruling on it and we just have to live with it."

Drew said Williams, who can't be in the arena for games while he's suspended, was back at the team hotel and in good spirits.

"I saw him at breakfast and he was in great shape," Drew said. "He's ready to move on. It's an unfortunate set of circumstances and you've got to put it behind you."

Marvin Williams has already missed 15 games this season with back and right knee injuries.

Maurice Evans moved into the starting lineup in place of Marvin Williams, who's averaging 10.9 points and 4.8 rebounds.

Mayo: 'Energy drink' led to ban

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Memphis Grizzlies guard O.J. Mayo says he believes an "energy drink" he bought at a gas station contained the substance that led to his 10-game suspension for violating the NBA's drug policy.

Mayo was jovial and smiling as he spoke about his suspension for the first time Saturday before the Grizzlies' game against the Washington Wizards, taking questions from reporters on the team's practice court.

But he wouldn't get too specific.

"I didn't know it had any bad substances in it, and it caused a 10-game suspension," Mayo said. "It's not like I went to a GNC and got some Muscle Armor or ordered some supplement off the Internet or anything. It was just a local gas station that kind of got me hemmed up."

The NBA suspended Mayo on Thursday for testing positive for dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA), which is on the league's list of banned performance-enhancing drugs. His suspension started Friday night at Philadelphia, and he will be eligible to return Feb. 15, also against the 76ers in Memphis.

Mayo spoke and then had to leave the arena at least two hours before tipoff. The Grizzlies are holding O.J. Mayo bobblehead night in honor of the No. 3 pick overall in the 2008 draft.

Mayo's third season has been rough and almost seems to be unraveling after he opened his NBA career as runner-up to Derrick Rose of Chicago for Rookie of the Year.

Mayo lost his starting position in November, has been in a fight with a teammate when he refused to pay up after los-

ing at cards during a team charter and had to deal with off-court family issues.

He's averaging 12.2 points a game and playing 28.8 minutes. Not what was envisioned for the phenom who was one-and-done at Southern California. After he left USC, the Trojans were hit with NCAA sanctions when it was determined that Mayo received improper benefits.

His troubles this season started Nov. 20 when he was late for a game-day shootaround, leading coach Lionel Hollins to take him out of the starting lineup against the Miami Heat.

Since then, the 6-foot-4 Mayo has come off the bench in a move made ostensibly to bolster the scoring and energy among the reserves.

"Moving to the bench, I thought it was a benefit for the team," Mayo said. "Me and (Hollins) talked about it at

length, and it seemed to work out for our team."

Off the court, Mayo's father, Kenneth Maurice Ziegler, 39, was charged Dec. 23 with attempted murder after he hit a police officer with his car and dragged him for several feet in Huntingdon, W.Va.

Mayo has declined to comment on the arrest. He didn't live with his father growing up, but Ziegler did help Mayo's mother, Alisha Mayo, hand out turkeys and hams in Huntingdon on Mayo's behalf in November.

After the Grizzlies' Jan. 2 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers, Mayo was involved in a fight with teammate Tony Allen over a debt from an in-flight card game on the team's return from the West Coast.

Mayo missed the next game at home against Oklahoma City. The team said the reason was bronchitis.

But Mayo also had visible facial injuries from the fight when he joked with Allen a

couple days later. The fight prompted the Grizzlies to ban gambling on team flights.

His play and shooting had been inconsistent since. He missed all four of his shots in Wednesday's loss at New Jersey. That marked the first time in his career Mayo was held scoreless.

If all of that wasn't enough, Mayo has been mentioned in trade rumors often.

And now this.

Mayo said Saturday he was unaware the over-the-counter product contained a substance banned by the league. Asked if he understood how people question that when athletes work so hard on their bodies, Mayo said he probably could ask any NBA athlete about DHEA and didn't think he'd get an answer.

"There are just so many substances that are considered banned substances because in some way it could help your performance on the court," Mayo said. "As athletes, we

should be responsible for what we put in our bodies. I understand that.

"Wizards forward Rashard Lewis received a similar suspension for use of DHEA in 2009 when he was with the Orlando Magic. He said before the game he can relate to Mayo making an honest mistake with so much on the banned list and items added every year.

"After my incident, I was told that you really have to pay close attention to what you purchasing, even if it's out of a Walgreens or a supplement store or GNC, anything, from cough medicine. It can be on the list," Lewis told The Washington Post.

NBA players are subject to four random samples each season. Mayo said there were suspicions with his first sample taken in mid-November. The league called him in early-December to tell him they were going to test his alternate sample from that time, leading to the suspension.

Haas, Mickelson tied for lead; Tiger falters



SAN DIEGO (AP)—The way Phil Mickelson likes to play golf, he didn't have much fun Saturday at Torrey Pines.

Based on how he needs to play the South Course, Phil was thrilled.

Mickelson gave up on his swash-buckling style by playing it safe in the Farmers Insurance Open, making eight pars and a birdie on the back nine for a 4-under 68 that gave him a share of the lead with Bill Haas.

"This course doesn't reward you for taking on any challenge," Mickelson said. "Any my more conservative approach into the greens, albeit boring, has led me to be on top of the leaderboard."

He was joined by Haas, who kept one shot ahead of Mickelson for most of the back nine until his wedge hopped hard on the firm green and went just over the back on the par-5 18th. He missed a 4-foot par putt and had to settle for a 1-under 71.

They were at 12-under 204, a stroke ahead of Hunter Mahan and Bubba Watson, who each made eagle on the 18th.

Tiger Woods, who has not lost at Torrey Pines in seven years, was nowhere to be found.

His start to a new season brought out a familiar result. Just like so much last year, Woods goes into a final round out of contention on a course where he once dominated. Woods made bogey from the second fairway with a wedge in his hand, and his day didn't improve. He shot a 2-over 74, ending his streak of 21 straight rounds at par or better on the South Course in a tour event.

"I did not play well at all today," said Woods, who was eight shots behind. "It was a struggle all day, and I finally found something at 16. But 15 holes already had gone by, so that was pretty frustrating."

Mickelson's frustrations are entirely different, only at least he felt like he was winning the battle.

Torrey Pines always felt like home to Mickelson, who grew up in San Diego playing this public gem along the Pacific bluffs. He won the Buick Invitational three times, the last title coming 10 years ago. And then Rees Jones came in to revamp the South Course to get ready for the U.S. Open in 2008.

Since then, Mickelson has not finished better than fourth, and he has criticized Jones for changing the nature of Torrey.

Mickelson, whose reputation has been built on taking on risks, decided to go a different route.

"I love playing aggressive," he said. "I think people want to see birdies and they want to see bogeys. They want to see us attacking holes trying to get it close. And this course just doesn't reward you for taking any risk. In fact, it penalizes you. That's why I've kind of steadily worked my way up without too many mistakes."

Even with his longtime nemesis out of the way, Mickelson doesn't see an easy path to winning.

Mahan and Watson each had 69 and were at 11-under 205. Another shot back was Anthony Kim, showing signs of turning his game around.



Phil Mickelson follows the flight of his tee shot on the second hole of the South Course at Torrey Pines during the third round of the Farmers Insurance Open golf tournament in San Diego, Saturday, Jan. 29, 2011. **AP**

Kim escaped with only a bogey on the 15th after an adventure through the eucalyptus trees, and birdied the 18th for a 71.

John Daly, who pulled within one shot of the lead early in the third round, fell apart with a string of bogeys and shot 76.

Mickelson made only one birdie on the par 5s, and one birdie on the back nine, although it was a dandy. With a breeze in his face, he hit 4-iron with a slight cut just in front of the green and saw it roll 6 feet away to the front flag.

Haas was paying attention to that one, a sign of what he faces in the final round.

"It was a shot that I don't have," he said. "And if I did have it, I wouldn't try it."

He is satisfied with his own game, and Mickelson is equally impressed, saying Haas has a "simple, beautiful swing" with good touch around the greens.

Haas didn't make too many mistakes, and pulled ahead with two good birdies. With the tee back in U.S. Open territory on the 13th, making it play over 600 yards, Haas nearly got home with a 3-wood that set up and easy up-and-down birdie. All that kept him out of the lead was a wedge that bounced over the firm 18th green into the rough.

Woods started the third round only five shots behind, and that was as close as he got.

It what has become a troublesome theme for Woods this week, the wedge is what held him back. From just over 100 yards in the fairway, he dumped a wedge into a bunker and left himself no shot, blasting out to 20 feet for bogey. That was followed by a three-putt bogey, and a bunker-to-bunker bogey on the fifth hole.

He picked up birdies on the par 5s on the front nine, and played 1 over the rest of the way. When he was in the fairway with a short iron or a wedge, he never gave himself many looks at birdie.

The star of his group was Jhonatan Vegas, the Venezuela rookie coming off a playoff win at the Hope. He made his first meeting with Woods seem like an ordinary round. With some good par saves and a two-putt birdie at the end, he wound up beating Woods by five shots and still has a chance to win the tournament.

Vegas was at 9-under 207, only three shot out of the lead.

"I felt comfortable playing with him," Vegas said. "And the crowd was crazy, but it was fun. I enjoyed it."

Few people are having more fun than Mickelson, who hopes to have discovered how to win at Torrey Pines, and is relishing in having his wife, Amy, mingling in the crowd at a golf tournament for the first time since she was diagnosed with breast cancer in May 2009. She showed up at the 18th green at the Masters when Mickelson won last year, and spent much of her time in a golf cart at the soggy Ryder Cup in Wales.

"I love playing well in this tournament, and I've missed it," Mickelson said.

Happy in Hawaii, Pro Bowlers have final 'workouts'



HONOLULU (AP)—After a week of practices about as stressful as a Hawaiian sunset, players shifted to Aloha Stadium for their final workouts before Sunday's Pro Bowl.

Workout, in this case, is a highly dubious description. The most work done in their brief on-field appearances on Saturday was signing autographs for the fans who showed up in the dazzling island sunshine and everyone involved seemed thrilled that this game is back in Hawaii.

Even New England's Bill Belichick, the AFC's coach, departed from his dour reputation to smile a time or two. And there was no need for that hoodie in this weather.

Fans with special permission to be on the field during practice far outnumbered any "working" media, and it was difficult to locate anyone actually participating in drills amid the throng, although there was the amusing sight of Arizona wide receiver Larry Fitzgerald working on the kickoff team, something he probably hasn't done since junior high, if then.

Peyton Manning paused from a casual chat with fellow AFC quarterback Philip Rivers to deadpan about the serious nature of the final pre-game preparation.

"It's a tough one," he said. "We're getting a lot done."

Say what you want about the laid-back irrelevance of this mostly de-

fenseless game a week in advance of the hyper intensity of the Super Bowl, there is no lacking of star power, despite the fact that conference champions Pittsburgh and Green Bay aren't even represented. The most notable absence is that of New England's Tom Brady, who was supposed to be the AFC starting quarterback but withdrew from the game because he is undergoing surgery to repair a stress fracture in his right foot.

But the game still has the top three passers in the league this season. Rivers, who replaces Brady in the starting lineup, led the league with 4,710 yards. Manning, making his 11th Pro Bowl appearance, was a very close second with 4,710. NFC backup Drew Brees, last year's Super Bowl hero, was third in yards passing with 4,620.

NFC starting quarterback Michael Vick of Philadelphia probably appreciates his appearance more than anyone on either side of the ball, considering how far he has come since serving prison time for his role in dogfighting operation.

"This one feels great due to the fact that I've been through so much and trained to getting back to this position," he said earlier this week. "It's paramount for me and my family and I'm just thankful."

Arizona safety Adrian Wilson has said he was surprised to make the team—as a starter, no less—after what he considered a sub-par season. He said he never takes this game for granted and wants to let first timers

know that they shouldn't be misled by the relaxed nature of the experience.

"There are little things that you learn, the twists of the game," he said, "and you just take that to the young guys and make them understand how important this is."

Fitzgerald, the 2009 Pro Bowl MVP, was one of the replacements named for 10 Packers and Steelers who were Pro Bowl selections. Another 17 players are out with injuries, most recently Philadelphia wide receiver DeSean Jackson, who tweaked his injured left knee in practice this week. Miles Austin of Dallas arrived at 1 a.m. on Friday to take Jackson's place.

Another player, Kevin Williams of Minnesota, is not playing for personal reasons.

The NFL's decision to move the Pro Bowl to a week ahead of the Super Bowl helps fill the void in the two-week leadup to the season's biggest game, rather than have the all-star tilt languish as an even more irrelevant afterthought. Baltimore linebacker Terrell Suggs isn't sure he buys that concept, but he's glad the game is back in Hawaii after one season in Miami.

"I can go to Florida anytime," he said.

While just about every player took time after practice to sign autographs, no one singed more than Manning. No one was even close, something that was not lost on the NFL personnel on hand.

"He gets it," one of them said. "That's why he's so popular."

CLIJSTERS

From Page 28

“To win it in this way means a lot,” she told a TV interviewer after the match. “This one to me, is the one. When I think back on my childhood, I remember watching the Australian Open and seeing Monica Seles win many times. I think they used to go up into the stands. I remember her doing her speech there, and it was something that I was just amazed by. It seemed like such a fairy tale.”

Li was trying to become the first Asian to win a major, and the final was far from a smooth ride. She complained to the chair umpire about the Chinese fans and was bothered by photographers’ flashes in the court-side pits. The outbursts from all over the arena were jarring.

“They shouted ‘finish her off!’ sometimes even when we were hitting the ball,” Li said

through a translator. “I thought, ‘How can they do this?’”

In doubles, Bob and Mike Bryan successfully defended their title, beating Indian stars Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi 6-3, 6-4 for their fifth Australian crown and 10th Grand Slam championship.

The Bryans have held the No. 1 doubles ranking the past eight years. They have also won the U.S Open three times and the French Open and Wimbledon once each.

On Sunday, Andy Murray hopes to win his first major and end an almost 75-year drought for British men at the majors. He meets No. 3 Novak Djokovic in Sunday’s final. Djokovic leads their head-to-heads 4-3, but has lost the last three. Djokovic is the favorite and won in Australia in 2008 - the last time neither No. 1 Rafael Nadal nor No. 2 Roger Federer was in the final.

Clijsters didn’t win her first ma-

jor until 2005—after she’d lost four finals. All the while, the Australian public regarded her as one of their own. And not only because she was once engaged to Lleyton Hewitt, the Australian who won two Grand Slam titles and was ranked No. 1 before Federer began his run. Clijsters is laid back and resilient, and the fans in Melbourne noticed.

“In the past year people have been so supportive,” she said. “They have been amazing and I really appreciate it. I always felt bad that I (didn’t) give something back—once I got to the final and lost to Justine—and now I feel maybe worthy to be ‘Aussie Kim.’”

With no Aussies making it past the third round at Melbourne Park, Clijsters clearly was a popular choice at Melbourne Park.

She had said that 2011 would be her last full season on tour. Now, the 27-year-old Belgian is already saying

she’d like to defend her Australian title and possibly play at the London Olympics.

Clijsters’ daughter Jada was on court when her mother collected the 2009 U.S. Open trophy—in her third tournament back from a 2 1/2-year break from the tour to get married and have a child. On Saturday night, Jada was in the players’ lounge, running and jumping into the arms of her father and uncle.

Clijsters started convincingly, winning the first eight points for a 2-0 lead. Then Li rallied. She got her forehand working and fired winners with her two-handed backhand.

Clijsters looked unsettled, dropping serve four straight times. She then decided to mix it up after Li won the first set and took a 3-2 lead in the second. That’s when Li’s game started to fold. Perhaps the pressure of being the first Chinese in a Grand Slam final was getting to her.

Li reached the Australian semifinals last year, taking eventual champion Serena Williams to two tiebreak sets. She rallied from 0-5 down in

the first set to win the Sydney International final over Clijsters in a warmup tournament two weeks ago. This time was clearly different.

SHUTOUT

From Page 28

the Ol’Aces in the first game, while IT&E faced the Tanapag Braves in the last game. The Rays dueled the Comets in the second game of the opening day of the Major League, which had its participating team joining the traditional parade during the opening ceremony of the 2011 Saipan Little League Baseball.

After the parade and other opening activities, Saipan Mayor Donald Flores went up to the mound for the ceremonial first pitch of the season. House Speaker Eli Cabrera and Senator Ralph Torres accompanied Flores in the ceremony, as they served as batter and catcher, respectively.

Braves in just four innings. The Braves managed to load the bases in the top of the first inning, but left all runners stranded.

IT&E took a 3-0 lead in the bottom half off a double, three walks, and a whole lot of errors.

The Braves then left runners at first and second in the top of the second. IT&E put up six runs in the bottom half to take the air out of the Braves sail. With two outs, IT&E scored all its runs off four walks, two hits, and a bunch of errant throws.

It just got worse for the Braves, who went 1-2-3 in the top of the third.

Then IT&E added five more runs in the bottom frame off four walks, a hit, a bean ball and errors.

KNIGHTS

From Page 28

Reynald Cabaltica caught fire in the Knights’ 19-point win, tallying 30 points. Cabaltica’s guns were blazing early, as he sizzled for 10 points in the first period.

The Knights attacked early, capitalizing on a depleted GCA crew. The Eagles had only five players in the opening quarter and almost lost the match by forfeit when they had only three players on the court when the match was about to start. GCA was given a 15-minute forfeiture time and two more players arrived before the clocked lapsed.

The Eagles thought the lone game of the day was set for

5:30pm, not 4:30pm and they never recovered from that miscommunication, especially after playing without their two key players—top scorer Dae Min Jeon and Moon Bin Hong.

GCA coach Ed Salas said the two players are out of the team for the rest of the season due to academic reasons. Salas explained Jeon and Hong had an agreement with their parents to have straight “As” but since they didn’t make the grade, they couldn’t play basketball anymore.

“It’s tough to lose two starters, but I have to respect the decision of the parents. Academics takes precedence,” Salas said.

With GCA still in disarray, Cabaltica and company worked their way to con-

trol the tempo of the match. Cabaltica scored seven of the Knight’s first nine points for a 9-2 lead. Angelo Salas kept the Eagles afloat in the opening period, hitting two triples and finishing with 10 points.

By the end of the first quarter, MCS was ahead by only four, 20-16. In the second canto, the rest of the GCA players arrived, but their presence was not enough to stop the Knights’ momentum.

Mt. Carmel began pulling away in the second frame with Cabaltica adding 10 more points and Jonathan Griffin chipping in eight to lift their team to a 44-30 half-time advantage.

The lead ballooned to as much as 22 in the second half with Cabaltica still firing

and the rest of his teammates gaining confidence with their own shots.

The falling Eagles had only Angelo Salas trying to end the team’s slide, but faltered. Salas finished with a game-high 31 points, but the Eagles still dropped to a 1-4 record, losing their last four games.

The victory last Friday avenged Mt. Carmel’s 44-55 loss to GCA in the first round of the double-round robin regular season early this month.

MCS 78—Cabaltica 30, Griffin 12, M. Kim 11, Saludez 8, Baka 7, Yoon 4, Gagaring 2.

GCA 59 – A. Salas 31, Chargualaf 10, Jones 10, Libut 2, Kim 2, Choi 2, J. Salas 2.

Scoring by quarters: 20-16, 44-30, 55-43, 78-59.

FIELDERS

From Page 28

wild pitch and an error. Uchau reached off an error and was singled in by Wanket, while Keene Guerrero drove in Gabionza.

The Aces left runners stranded at second and third in the bottom half and the Fielders shot ahead, 10-2, in the seventh inning off errors and walks. The Aces mounted a five-run rally attempt in the final frame but still came up a little short.

Cody Kaipat led the Fielders, as he went five and 2/3 innings and allowed two unearned runs with zero hits, seven strikeouts, six walks, and a pair of hit batsmen. He was 2-for-3 at the plate and had a double and a two-run blast. Khobby Kaipat went 3-for-3 with a triple.

The Lions went 1-2-3 in the bottom half.

Then the Fielders broke open the game with a big five-run inning in the top of the third. Ricardo Villagomez led off with a walk and scored off an error. A ground out later, the next two batters reached off errors, setting up a RBI triple by Carl Camacho. Camacho brought in Poland Masaharu Jr. and Patrick Tenorio scored, in between, off errors. A fly out later, Alan Aguon drew a walk, while both Camacho and Aguon would eventually come in off errors. The Lions went 1-2-3 again in the bottom of the third.

In the top of the fourth, the Fielders added three runs to make it 9-0, thanks to a RBI single by Masaharu Jr. and a 2RBI single by Camacho. Joe Kileleman, Tenorio and Masaharu Jr. all came to the plate.

The Lions managed a run in the bottom of the fourth, but the Fielders tallied two more in the top of the fifth to thwart the effort. Then the Lions managed one more run to close out fifth. With the Fielders ahead, 11-2, both teams scored three more runs in the final two innings.

Camacho got in a little

trouble in the bottom of the sixth, as the Lions accrued their three runs off two singles, a double and a triple, but Tenorio came in for relief and closed out the game.

Camacho provided a solid five-inning effort, tallying four RBIs off a sacrifice fly, a single and a triple. Tenorio scored three runs, while Masaharu Jr. batted 3-for-5 with a double and four runs. Aguon also went 3-for-5 and had two runs.

BIG LEAGUE
Fielders 8, Hunters 6

The Hunters went 1-2-3 to start the game and the Fielders took an early 2-0 lead in the bottom half of the first inning.

Jonathan Celis led off with a single, stole second, and scored off a wild pitch. Teammate Kevin Villagomez drew a walk and scored off an error.

Then Fielders starting pitcher, Nathan Guerrero, sat down three batters in the top of the second. However, the Hunters shot back and managed a 1-2-3 inning in the bottom half and then briefly tied it at 2-all in the top of the third. Aaron Taitano led off with a single, stole second, and scored off an error, while Sandy Aguon drew a two-

out walk, stole second, and was brought in by Joseph Palacios.

The Fielders pulled ahead, 4-2, in the bottom half off errors.

The Hunters went 1-2-3 to start the fourth inning and the Fielders added two more runs in the bottom. With two outs, Celis hit a two-run blast and brought Jonah Villagomez home.

The Fielders’ Kevin Villagomez relieved Guerrero to start the fifth inning, but the Hunters still managed a pair of runs. Taitano and Anthony Guerrero came in off a walk, a hit, and an error.

The Fielders’ Juan Maratita belted a triple and scored off an error in the bottom of the fifth. The Fielders lead it, 7-4, with two innings to go.

Kevin Villagomez struck out the side in the sixth inning, while his team added another run to its lead in the bottom half.

The Hunters managed two runs in the final stanza, but the Fielders’ Maratita took the mound in the end to close the final out.

Guerrero went four innings and allowed a pair of unearned runs with six strikeouts, four hits and two walks. Celis batted 2-for-4 with a solo-homer, two RBIs, and two runs.

Falcons 10, Ol’Aces 0

The Falcons routed the Ol’Aces in five innings. The Aces loaded the bases to start the game, but left everybody stranded. Then the Falcons took a 2-0 lead off a 2RBI triple by Frankie Lifofoi. Travis Malwelbug and Donnie Manalo came to the plate.

The Aces left runners at second and third in the top of the second. Then the Falcons’ Carlos Evangelista reached and scored off errors to make it 3-0, after two innings.

The Aces left runners at first and second in the top of the third and the Falcons added a pair of runs in the bottom half. Benen Iguel hit a 2RBI single that brought in Juan Quitugua and Matt Hamilton.

The Aces suffered three strikeouts in four at bats in the top of the fourth and it got worse from there.

The Falcons scored four runs in the bottom half off walks and errors to take a big 9-0 lead. The Aces went 1-2-3 to start the fifth and the Falcons needed only one run to end it early.

Falcons pitcher Logan Martin went three and 2/3 hitless innings with 10 strikeouts, six walks and one hit-by-pitch.

Rays 8, Comets 6

The Rays drew first blood and scored two runs in the top of the first. Peterson Rengiil doubled home J.D. Delos Santos. Teammate Jose Pangelinan singled him home shortly after. The Comets went 1-2-3 in the bottom half.

Then Rays added two more runs in the top of the second. Ramnes Karben drove in N-nes Siechh. Rays’ Jay Kalen came next and singled in Karben.

The Comets loaded the bases, but left all runners stranded in top of the third.

Rengiil doubled and scored off a couple passed balls in the bottom half to make it 5-0.

The Comet’s bit back and tied the game at 5-all in the top of the fifth. Austin Hocog hit a 2RBI single that brought home J.J. Monkeya and Erik Cruz; Hocog scored off an error. Then after a hit, a walk and a force out, Cassius Fitial connected with a 2RBI single that scored Jermo Okururu and Roberto Paragados Jr.

The Falcons reclaimed the lead, 7-5, in the bottom half off two hits, a walk and an error; Karben and Kalen came in to score.

The Comets left runners on the corners in the top of the fifth and the Rays added another run in the bottom half off errors. The Comets managed to load the bases and score a run in the final inning, but the Rays defense regrouped and fought them off.

IT&E 14,
Tanapag Braves 0

IT&E shut out the Tanapag

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES				
NBA STANDINGS				
		Memphis	24 24	.500 16 1/2
		Houston	22 27	.449 19
EASTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	35	11	.761	—
New York	24	22	.522	11
Philadelphia	20	26	.435	15
New Jersey	14	34	.292	22
Toronto	13	35	.271	23
Southeast Division				
Miami	32	14	.696	—
Orlando	30	17	.638	2 1/2
Atlanta	30	18	.625	3
Charlotte	20	26	.435	12
Washington	13	33	.283	19
Central Division				
Chicago	33	14	.702	—
Milwaukee	19	26	.422	13
Indiana	17	27	.386	14 1/2
Detroit	17	30	.362	16
Cleveland	8	38	.174	24 1/2
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Southwest Division				
San Antonio	40	7	.851	—
Dallas	31	15	.674	8 1/2
New Orleans	31	17	.646	9 1/2
Northwest Division				
Oklahoma City	30	16	.652	—
Denver	28	18	.609	2
Utah	28	19	.596	2 1/2
Portland	25	22	.532	5 1/2
Minnesota	11	36	.234	19 1/2
Pacific Division				
L.A. Lakers	33	14	.702	—
Phoenix	21	24	.467	11
Golden State	19	27	.413	13 1/2
L.A. Clippers	18	28	.391	14 1/2
Sacramento	12	33	.267	20
Yesterday's Games				
Chicago 110, Indiana 89				
Memphis 107, Washington 93				
Minnesota 103, Toronto 87				
Dallas 102, Atlanta 91				
Milwaukee 91, New Jersey 81				
San Antonio 108, Houston 95				
Sacramento 102, New Orleans 96				
L.A. Clippers 103, Charlotte 88				
BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS				

Weekend Sports

Women's sports were showcased last week with the staging of the championship games in the 2010 NMIFA Women's Futsal Fall League and the continuation of the regular season of the Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization's soccer and volleyball leagues.

Paire Football Club advanced to the finals of both the A and B leagues and swept the championships. Paire first took the A league title after clobbering MP United, 8-1, then went 2-0 in the finals after edging Matansa U18 in the B league, 3-2.

In the MISO soccer league played at the Saipan Southern High School Field, Kagman

Women's sports highlight week

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER

High School remained unbeaten in four games, notching two wins and two draws. Marianas High School 1 holds a 1-0-3 win-loss-draw slate, MHS 1 has a 1-1-2 card, and Southern owns a 0-1-3.

Still in MISO, Saipan International School also kept its perfect record last week after downing MHS 2. The Lady Geckos improved to a 5-0 slate, one game ahead of the second-running MHS 1, 4-1. Grace

Christian Academy is ranked third with a 3-2 record, following a victory over Southern. Southern fell to a 1-4 mark to remain at the bottom of the team standings, while Kagman holds a 2-3 card.

MISO's boys basketball league at the MHS Gymnasium also continued last week with Kagman improving to a 5-0 slate, and Mt. Carmel posting its first week of the season.

Still in basketball at the Gil-

bert C. Gymnasium, the UBA/Docomo caging had its second week of action with NMC Proa winning over the Hoopaholics in the battle of unbeaten teams and IT&E Fundamentalists and IP&E Konflikt breaking into the win column.

The Ada Gym was also the venue for the Masters league's Clash of the Titans and the 35A All-Stars prevailed over the 40A selection.

In other major developments

last week, the CNMI formally announced its bid for the 2017 Pacific Mini Games, Kelvin Fitial settled for a controversial draw in a title fight in Guam, and CNMI junior golfer R.J. Macaranas was feted for an outstanding season.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial met with members of the pre-bid committee and after a thorough discussion the group decided that the CNMI will submit its bid for the qua-

drenial competition.

Fitial fought Pacific Xtreme Combat champion Roque Martinez for the heavyweight crown in PXC 22: Battle For The Belt at the University of Guam Fieldhouse and after trading strikes for five rounds, the duel ended in a draw.

It was a frustrating result for Fitial, who many MMA fans thought should have won the bout. With the draw, Martinez kept his heavyweight title.

Macaranas received two trophies in the 2010 Southern California PGA Banquet of Champions for placing third both in the Summer Series Player of the Year and Desert Series Player of the Year.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Members of Paire Football Club A league team pose for a group photo after beating MP United in the finals of the NMIFA futsal league at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

R.J. Macaranas, second left, joins other awardees in the 2010 Southern California PGA Banquet of Champions at the Friendly Hills Country Club in Los Angeles.



WALTER SUTHERLAND

35A All-Stars' Jun Tabora pulls up for a shot against a 45A All-Stars defender during the Clash of the Titans at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Kagman High School's Ichitaro Faisao looks for a teammate to pass the ball to as two Saipan Southern High School players defend him at the baseline during their game in the MISO caging last week at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Prospects' Eli Aughenbaugh drives against two IT&E Fundamentalists defenders during their game in the UBA/Docomo caging last week at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.



WALTER SUTHERLAND

A Grace Christian Academy player goes for a hit near the net during their game against Kagman High School in the MISO volleyball league last week at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.



WALTER SUTHERLAND

Kagman High School (maroon uniforms) and Saipan Southern High School female strikers in action during their game in the MISO soccer league last week at the Southern field.

Clijsters takes Aussie Open crown

By JOHN PYE
AP SPORTS WRITER

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Kim Clijsters believes she's now earned the nickname she had for years in Australia.

"I finally feel like you guys can call me 'Aussie Kim' because I won the title," a teary Clijsters said after beating China's Li Na 3-6, 6-3, 6-3 Saturday night to capture her first Australian Open. "It's nice to finally get it this year."



Clijsters lost the 2004 Australian Open final to Justine Henin and lost four times in the semifinals. This was Clijsters' fourth Grand Slam tournament championship, but the first apart from the U.S. Open.

See **CLIJSTERS** on Page 26



Belgium's Kim Clijsters, left, holds the trophy along with runner-up China's Li Na after Clijsters won their women's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championships in Melbourne, Australia, Saturday, Jan. 29, 2011.

Knights end long drought

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

No more winless season for Mt. Carmel School. The Knights booked their first win in the 2010-2011 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Boys Basketball League after



routing Grace Christian Academy in their varsity game, 78-59, last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The victory was also Mt. Carmel's first since last season where it posted a dismal 0-6 card in the four-team field.

See **KNIGHTS** on Page 26



Mt. Carmel's Min Seong Kim, center, pulls up for a jumper against GCA's Si Woo Kim, left, and Brandon Chargualaf during their game in the MISO caging last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Fielders sweep opening day games

By WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



The Fielders swept all their three games in the opening day of the 2011 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday.

The Fielders topped the Ol'Aces, 10-7, in their Junior League game at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield. Then in Senior League, the Fielders torched the Lions, 14-5, while in the Big League, the Fielders bested the Hunters, 8-6.

JUNIORS Fielders 10, Ol'Aces 7

The Fielders' Kai Wanket reached on a bean ball and later scored off a couple of errors. Then in the bottom half, despite two free passes given up by pitcher, Cody Kaipat, the Fielders' infield still managed a 1-2-3 inning.

The Aces defense answered with a 1-2-3 inning to start the second, but left a man stranded at third in the bottom frame.

In the top of the third, Miko Gabionza reached with a fielder's choice, stole second, and scored off an error, but the Aces made it, 1-2, in the bottom half



The Fielders' Miko Gabionza dives back to first during their Junior League game against the Ol'Aces in the opening day of the 2011 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

when Danny Auther drew a walk and scored off a wild pitch.

The Fielders hit into a double play, followed by a strikeout in the top of the fourth inning and the Aces tied it at 2-all in the bottom half. Auden Ngeskebei drew a walk and scored off a couple errors.

Then the Fielders took a 5-2 lead in the top of the fifth. Gayvan Uchau led off with a

single and came in off a two-run homer by Cody Kaipat. Then Gabionza reached off an error, stole second, and came home off a Khobby Kaipat triple; The Aces went 1-2-3 in the bottom of the frame.

The Fielders added three more runs to the lead in the sixth. Jack Espinoza reached with a single and scored off a

See **FIELERS** on Page 26

Shutout wins in Majors

By WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Falcons and IT&E started their bids in the Majors with a bang after shutting out separate foes at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Ballfield last Saturday.

The Falcons played against
See **SHUTOUT** on Page 26



Mayor Donald Flores throws out the traditional first pitch during the opening of the 2011 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.